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ABSTRACT

This proceedings document provides the texts of 18 presentations given at a 3-day conference in 1993 which focused on policies, materials, programs, and activities being implemented in Alabama to foster the successful transition of youth with disabilities to adult life. First, four individuals with learning disabilities (Travis Moore, Kim Witherington, Tracey Smith, and Mark Pope) recount their personal stories. Next, 11 papers address Alabama programs and services, followed by 3 additional papers on transition. The papers are: (1) "Cullman County's Transition Program" (Kaye Hilton et al.); (2) "Jefferson County's Pilot Program on Functional Assessment" (Beverly Lavender); (3) "Elmore County's Language Cookbook: A Functional Language Curriculumn for the Moderately- to Severely-Handicapped" (Sandra Diaz et al.); (4) "Tuscaloosa's Program Where Consumers and Families Speak Up" (Linda Hutt et al.); (5) "Birmingham's Student Transitional Education Program (S.T.E.P.)" (Nan Butler et al.); (6) "The University of Alabama's Project BOLD: Services for Students with Learning Disabilities" (Pat Friend); (7) "UAB's Program for Students with Learning Disabilities" (Betty West and Carolyn Toler); (8) "The University of Alabama's 'LD Bridges to Career Success Project'" (Jamie Satcher and Marcheta McGhee); (9) "Real-Time Captioning in an Educational Setting: A Pilot Project at Auburn University" (Kelly Haynes); (10) "Auburn University's Transition Course" (Clarence Brown); (11) "Auburn University's Teacher Preparation Program with an Emphasis at the Secondary Level" (Philip Browning and Caroline Dunn); (12) "Self-Determination: An Essential Ingredient in Transition" (Philip Browning); (13) "The Transition of Alabama's Emotionally Disturbed Youth" (Rebecca Curtis and Cheryll Glisson); and (14) "Transition: Implications for Rehabilitation Counselors" (Maura Elizabeth Parry). A list of conference participants and a cumulative index to the three conference proceedings published in 1992, 1993, and 1994 completes the document. (DB)

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Transition III in Alabama: A Profile of Commitment

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State Conference Proceedings
January 1994

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Transition III in Alabama
A Profile of Commitment

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The joint funding for this state-wide conference was made available through Auburn University's Extension Division and the College of Education. The Alabama Division's of Special Education Services, Rehabilitation Services, and Vocational Education Services, and all conference participants extend their appreciation for helping to make this event possible.

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Keynoters

Travis Moore
A life-long story of transition

Lizzanne DeStephano, Co-Director
National Transition Institute
"Systems Change"

Philip Browning
Auburn University
"Self-Determination"

PREFACE

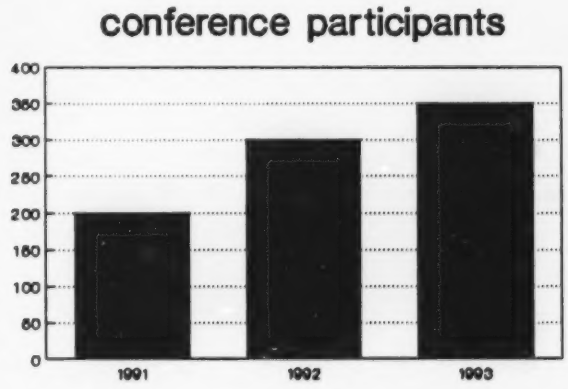
In April 1993, we held our third statewide conference on transition. The purpose of this annual event is to increase transition-related activities at the state and local level. Specifically, our intent is to generate new ideas for improving the quality of existing programs, strategies, techniques and policies so that the lives of Alabama's youth with disabilities will be enhanced.

I was thrilled with the enthusiasm displayed at our 1993 conference in that a sizable number of the participants appeared to feel that the conference belonged to them. Well, for what it is worth, that is the intended mission of this whole thing. Most definitely, this sense of participant ownership is in keeping with the main objectives, which are to

1. **increase the participant's knowledge of transition issues, problems, resources, and programs, especially as they pertain to Alabama; and**

2. **expand and strengthen the network for all persons interested in Alabama's youth with disabilities.**

Another delight was the number of people who attended. We just keep growing each year. As reflected below, we had 200 in attendance in 1991, 300 in 1992, and over 350 this last year.



In addition to the program's 19 concurrent sessions (see **A Window to Alabama's Commitment**), our consumer keynote guest was Mr. Travis Moore, a young man who has known of his learning disability since the second grade and lived with it all of these years. Travis and three of his friends each tell us **Their Stories**--and what stories they are! If you have time to read only one thing in these proceedings, I encourage you to select this section.

Also, we invited a nationally known leader in the field of transition to serve as one of our keynote speakers. Dr. Lizanne DeStefano, the Co-Director of the National Transition Institute, University of Illinois at Champaign Urbana, delivered an address entitled, **Transition: A Time for System's Change**. That is the message now ringing loud and clear throughout the country.

And then the address on **Self Determination**. My charge was for us to increase our understanding of self-determination, develop and refine strategies for effectively augmenting it, and help to insure that these strategies are practiced in our transition programs. I honestly believe that the results of these efforts will be significant gains in better preparing our students in transition to live a more self-directed and satisfying life.

Finally, this past year we added a day to the program that served as a "wrap-around" workshop. Specifically, on Wednesday April 28, a day-long **Academy on Functional Curricula** was conducted by staff from the National Council for Exceptional Children and sponsored by Alabama's Division of Special Education Services. Our plans are to add several additional topical workshops this coming year for those interested in exploring--in-depth--a transition-related area (e.g., job coaches, building local transition teams).

In closing, let me now extend an appreciation to the agency administrators who not only endorsed and co-sponsored this event, but also allowed their employees release time to attend. Lastly, I would like say thanks to the more than 350 conference participants for their enthusiasm and interest in the program. Without question, your active involvement helped to make this a fun and exciting educational event. I very much look forward to all of us (and more) congregating at the fourth state-wide transition conference to be held **February 23-25, 1994**. See you then!

Phil

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THE AUTHORS (and a window to what they say)

THE CONSUMERS

"The teachers knew a little bit about learning disabilities and they would look at me and say you can't be learning disabled. That always cracked me up; what do you look like if you are learning disabled?"

"I don't know which positions most of you are in, if you are in teaching, or if you are in guidance, or if you work for the state, or work with a student or a parent. But, I can tell you that each person with LD is different. Each one learns on their wave link."

"I am learning--it is not like I am unable to learn. That is the biggest trial, you know, that people just don't know what learning disabilities is. You see, when you tell someone you have a learning disability, there is a label put on you and they just assume that you can't make it . . . I am not going to let anyone hold me back."

". . . we were able to develop a life plan for Michelle which addresses all the major life areas. We have been able to develop a personalized service plan for Michelle . . . I want Michelle's week to have the same flow or rhythm of life as yours or mine."

THE PROVIDERS

"It is the rehabilitation counselor's responsibility to initiate interagency relationships to facilitate transition services for students with disabilities and to best interpret the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act."

"Project BOSS is empowering these students with disabilities through an individualized transition curriculum. It is bringing together the students, parents, teachers, Vocational Rehabilitation, Special Education, and local businesses in a continuing program which is leading to integration of individuals with disabilities into the community."

THE PROVIDERS (cont.)

"The Student Transitional Education Program coordinates many classes and job placements with the Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Services counselor assigned to each school. . . All students are placed in a nonprofit setting and minimum wage is paid by Student Transitional Education Program."

"The University of Alabama conducts a Career Development Project for students with learning disabilities to provide specialized services to facilitate the transition from postsecondary education to professional employment."

"Clearly, our state's youth in transition need to increasingly discover the right to self-determination, for it is through this self-empowerment that their level of human decency, pride, and sense of self-worth will be heightened and their quality of life enhanced."

"Most colleges and universities are willing to alter admissions policies for qualified applicants with learning disabilities so that these applicants will have equal opportunity to participate in college."

"Alabama needs to increase its supply of well trained secondary special education teachers. The state's requirement for K-12 certification, however, limits the needed concentration for preparing highly qualified teachers at the secondary level."

"This (university) course has been designed to reflect federal legislative mandates and State Department of Education initiatives as they relate to the needs of secondary students in transtion from school to community living/adjustment. Rehabilitation and special education students are brought together through this course in which they learn, in detail, about each discipline and how to establish cooperative working relationships."

"This proposed teacher preparation program is built on four major transition areas: (a) Functional Assessment and Curricula, (b) Vocational and Community Preparation, (c) Self-Determination and Family Involvement, and (d) Interagency Collaboration."

"In the state of Alabama, for the 1991-1992 school year, students with emotional conflicts dropped out at alarming rates. At the age of 16, the age at which a child may legally leave school, 90% of those exiting the system did so by dropping out. Of the 17 year-old students, 61% dropped out, while only 33% graduated . . . Individual Education Plan requirements."

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Their Personal Transition Stories

- **Their Disability**
- **Their Pain**
- **Their Support**
- **Their Determination**
- **Their Success**

Personally, I think this section is the most important part of the entire book. Here, four young adults with learning disabilities provide us with a glimpse into their life stories. I will not try to capture their stories for only their words can do that. I can assure you, however, that if you read what they have to share that you will be truly incaptured.

Travis (see keynote speaker picture), Kim, Tracy, and Mark each take us into their world of growing up and living with learning disabilities. One cannot help but empathize with them in the pains they have had to endure through the years--what it must really be like to be smart, yet to have the type and degree of learning problems that lead others to conclude that you are either dumb, or don't care, or are nothing more than a behavior problem. And, to be surrounded day in and day out in the class room by your student peers and teachers knowing that they don't know or understand.

Then how did they overcome these and other personal, educational and psychological obstacles and become so successful? With parental support? Yes! With well prepared teachers who cared? Yes! With the support and services of rehabilitation counselors? Yes? With educational programs especially designed for them? Yes! With tutors? Yes! But even more importantly, I think, they succeeded because of an inner strength they carry within them--a strength of "self-determination." Read their stories and celebrate in their victories. We have much to learn. They have much to teach.

All four story tellers were students at Auburn University at Montgomery and affiliated with AUM's Center for Special Services (one has now graduated). Dr. Nancy McDaniel is the Center Director and Ms. Gerri Wolfe is the Coordinator for Student Services. The purpose of the Center is to provide assistance and support to its students with disabilities.

Travis Moore's Story

My name is Travis Moore and I am a recent graduate from Auburn University at Montgomery. Some of my friends graduated with honors, with cum laude and such; I just graduated "thank the Laudie".

I was excited when Dr. Browning extended the invitation to me to speak at this conference. I talked this offer over with my good friend, Dr. Nancy McDaniel, and we decided that I would approach my talk by first giving you a brief background of my past history, or my life story. Then, I would bring you up-to-speed on my transition from college into work experience.

The Early Years

In the first grade, my parents walked into the little classroom during parent's night, and like all parents do, they noticed at the far end of the room that all of the other parents were sitting around one particular painting - - even though all the other kids' paintings were scattered around the room. My parents looked at that painting that they were all gathered around and then looked at each other and said, "That has got to be Travis'".

All the ladies and gentlemen were sitting around in the corner of my classroom on parent's night saying "that must be a disturbed little child". And Mom and Dad said "that's our boy". I can remember to this day making that painting and that everybody thought I was disturbed, but I was totally fascinated with a fingerpainting that you could make the swirls and that you could see depth. And I have had a strange relationship with school ever since!

It was all one color, it was dark navy blue and there were just swirls all the way around this thing. All the ladies and gentlemen were sitting around in the corner saying "that must be a disturbed little child". And Mom and Dad said "that's our boy". I can remember to this day making that painting and that everybody thought I was disturbed. But you see, I was totally fascinated with a fingerpainting that you could make the swirls and that you could see depth. And I have had a strange relationship with school ever since!

I was in second grade when I was diagnosed. My parents suspected, or were a little suspicious, that something was a little different about their son, because their daughter, who is 5 years older than I am, also had been diagnosed. And, just one year later they diagnosed me. I was diagnosed with dyslexia, hyperactivity, short-term memory disorder, and small motor control problems.

My Father kids me as a "family job" - we were riding to my Grandparents and what Daddy was trying to get me to learn with the mind's eye was all about how you could think and how you could learn. Dad said, "Close your eyes and tell me what you see". I just closed my eyes and said, "colors". It just blew my Daddy's mind completely. He's an engineer and we never have figured out how each other's brain works to this day.

I was diagnosed with dyslexia, hyperactivity, short-term memory disorder, small motor control, so my handwriting was atrocious. My teachers couldn't read my cursive writing, so I had to print everything.

As I said, I was in elementary school when I was diagnosed. Dr. John Bridger was my pediatrician and at the time was one of the very first people in the area of High Point, North Carolina, that knew anything about Learning Disabilities. Miss Moffet was one of the ladies who also helped him diagnose these children. I called myself a guinea pig, because they put me through every battery of test that was known to man. They put me through what I considered torture as a child. But as I look back, I am extremely thankful for that.

Because of my diagnosis, my handwriting was atrocious. From the very beginning, I had to do what I thought was a cute way of mimicking my father, which was "printing" everything. I always had to print everything because the teachers couldn't read my cursive writing.

As I grew up, I required numerous tutors and numerous education benefits. Unfortunately, during my early years, the school did not have any of these benefits. My parents had to go through regular sacrifice to pay for tutors to help me make it through school.

I guess my only regret growing up with learning disabilities was that having to be tutored 3 to 4 times a week prevented me from being able to play in high school or junior high school athletic programs. This probably is one of the hardest parts to deal with. You are six foot three and 175 pounds in high school, the basketball coach and the football and baseball coach wants you and you have the skill but you don't have the time. You are always having to be tutored and you can't go to practice. It is not that the disability bothered me, it is the pressure and the anger that goes with it. I've talked about this with some of the students that I have dealt with and some of the biggest problems that they had, was this emotional build up that I had. Fortunately, my parents had about 125 acres behind our house. It was a good place to let off steam without being around anybody. Athletics was something that I sacrificed, but in the long run it was a benefit.

The struggles that I went through going to the tutors was something else, because it was not until I was in the sixth grade that I actually learned how to read. It was through those trials though that made me strong enough to be able to handle life on my own. I was dealing with teachers and, eventually professors, who really did not understand learning disabilities at all.

My High School Years

Now to give you a background to when I was in high school. I graduated in 1984 from Ragsdale High School at Jamestown, North Carolina. The teachers knew a little bit about learning disabilities and they would look at me and say, "You can't be learning disabled." That always cracked me up; what do you look like if you are learning disabled? They just couldn't figure that out. It finally dawned on me in my senior year why they had difficulty understanding it. After all, I almost was making straight A's in advanced biology.

In North Carolina, it starts off with regular biology, then college prep, then advanced. I was making straight A's in advanced history, and they said, "how could you be learning disabled if you are doing that well". Well, all they had to do was ask my algebra teacher - - you could tell which ones who knew--because I was ready to flunk her class. Also, my English teacher, yea, she knew darned well that I was learning disabled. She said, "your stories are fantastic, if I could ever figure out how to read your handwriting."

Well, there were little tricks that you had to learn to study. This is my main point that I wanted to tell you about. My Mother, through blood, sweat, and tears, went through everything we could think of to help me learn. This is the reason I told you about the story of my painting and the story about learning about colors too; that is how this brain works.

The worst thing in the world that you can give to me is a black-and-white sheet of paper with just print on it. It is like looking at a rock with nothing on there for me to learn. I could read it if I kept on reading and reading and reading it. And, some of it would even sink in. But if you wanted me to retain it, that's time for me to play with the page. I get out my color hi-lighters and pens.

Mastering words and learning to spell I've yet to learn to do. I memorized the words that I have to spell so I have a very limited vocabulary in my spelling. A dictionary lives with me 24 hours a day. I have one of those Franklin computer things that helps me with words. But my vocabulary and speech always impressed the page, but I knew I couldn't put it on paper, so we were having to work with that. The inability to keep the numbers and letters in an algebraic problem followed me through school.

Later when I was in college, my classmates used to kid me a lot; they would say, "Here comes the pen man." They always knew that if they needed a pen they could ask Trav, he's got about seven or eight and they are different colors. But what I would have to do was highlight key areas with completely different colors. They really didn't have to coordinate, just so long as they were in different splotches coming down. Because, during the test I could close my eyes and I could not remember the black-and-white sheet of paper, but I could remember where on that sheet of paper was a particular color and what information was on it. That's how I learned!

But, anyhow, when I was doing these different things, learning disabilities actually made me stronger. Not just making colors, but when I was doing my mathematics - just regular mathematics, adding, multiplying, subtracting, dividing - the teachers could not figure out that I could tell them what the answer was, but if they put it on paper I was completely missing it. They couldn't figure out why. My geometry teacher was completely flustered

The teachers knew a little bit about learning disabilities and they would look at me and say you can't be learning disabled. That always cracked me up; what do you look like if you are learning disabled? They just couldn't figure that out. It finally dawned on me in my senior year why it was difficulty for them to understand. You see, I was almost making straight A's in advanced biology.

because I could take the object she would draw on the board and I would close my eyes and keep up with it because I would rotate it in my mind where the ray was moving, but I couldn't do the mathematical problem to prove that point. I could beat her completing it when I talked to her, but I couldn't put it on paper. So she knew that I understood the information but I couldn't down on paper, so therefore, I would flunk the tests.

When I got older, I started taking my hi-lighters and marking the different markings, because sometimes it would disappear when I was taking the test. So, before I ever even started taking the test, the first thing I did was go through and mark everyone of the signs that I had to remember to take care of. I went through and marked certain ones in one color and, certain ones in another color.

When I was taking social studies in high school, my mother and I would study constantly. I remember this vividly. We were learning the eight different parts of the Islamic religion. I was fascinated, but I could not remember the eight different parts. Mom was sitting there trying to help me get through this, and I'm doodling which I would constantly do. Mom reached over and said, "draw a wagon wheel". So I drew a wagon wheel. Mom got her pencil out and drew or wrote down the eight different parts on the spokes on that wagon wheel. We did that for the entire chapter's worth of material.

The next day, the social studies teacher came around and handed out the test for which I had prepared. I immediately set it aside and started drawing spokes all over the clean desk. By this time, the teacher has worked his way around the room, and he is back out to the front when he sees me looking down on this desk and filling out the answers to the test. Well, any teacher would automatically say that is cheating in a heartbeat.

He came running over there and he snatched my paper - he was known for this - he whipped out his magic marker and put an F right in middle of that thing. I'm sorry, people, but there was only one man that I was ever intimidated by and that was Daddy, and it will tickle him to know how that has been such a benefit to me. I jumped up and said:

me: **"What are you doing?".**

teacher: **"You're flunking, you flunked this test, you are cheating."**

me: **"Sir, I'm not cheating."**

teacher: **"I can see you are reading off your desk."**

me: **"Come over here; find a word on this desk." (He couldn't fine one. He would still say that I was cheating).**

teacher: **"Go to the principal's office."**

me: **"Fine." (I picked up the desk and walked out).**

teacher: **"Put that down!"**

me: **"No Sir, if I have to take this home, it's going with me."**

So I walked in the principal's office and set it down in his office.

me: **"Sir, we've got a problem. My social studies teacher, Mr. Chance, will be here in a minute and I want to get my word in before he starts talking."**

Well, the principal closed his office and we talked about the desk, because he had never had a student bring a desk in his office. But that goes to show that some of the students have to use different methods to study. I had to find mine all on my own; colors obviously worked and so did pictures. I'll never forget carrying my desk out of the classroom and down the hallway into the office.

The tutoring that I had during school, high school as well as college, blocked out the amount of time that I had to homework as well. So as Mark said, you had to go to tutoring as well as homework, it made for a very long day. This unfortunately increased your anger and frustration. That was one of the reasons that I was known very well in high school for having problems. I was very touchy and very easily set off. Fortunately, the teachers realized that and often took me off to the side and asked me if it was the one-on-one time that would help to diffuse my situation, whereas, if they challenged me in class it was a fight right there. And, I was one who would.

And Then on to College

When I went to East Carolina University in the Fall of 1984, I was completely on my own as far as trying to learn the information. There was not a support group then; the university did not have one. So I was pretty much on my own.

I chose East Carolina University for two reasons. The first reason was that my sister was already there. She was in her last year of a Master's Degree. So, I knew I could find anything on campus because of my sister. I had a second reason, and that was that Dr. John Bridges, my pediatrician, who was on the Board of Trustees. I knew that if I had to play an ace, I had to play a good one! I knew that if I had to pull a string, I was not afraid to drop a name if I had to at that age.

In 1987, I chose to serve a Church Mission for my church for two years. That was a good two years in that it got me out from underneath the academic umbrella, which was a constant headache and a constant threat to me. It was something I had to deal with everyday and, believe me, it was a struggle.

I finished the Mission in 1989. By that time, my parents had snuck down here to Alabama. My daddy gave me a choice. I could either go back to East Carolina University and finish my degree in computer science, which was my intended major at that time, or - - dad looked at me and kind of grinned for he knew darn well that I was going to take the second option. They lived on Lake Martin and he said, "I'm getting a bass boat, and you can enroll down here in an excellent business school." So I called my friends at East Carolina and said that I was not coming back.

To back up, I was told while I was in junior high that I would never graduate high school. I passed that milestone. They said if you ever pass high school you sure as heck will never graduate from college. At this point, they were almost right.

I enrolled at Auburn University at Montgomery. It was my first quarter back in school and I vividly remember walking around in the business building on campus. I felt like a little poor dog just dog-paddling around trying to keep my head above water, because it was all I could do.

I was on medication the entire time that I was in elementary, junior high, and high school, and I was on Dexedrine even part of the time at East Carolina University. It made a huge difference. But during that interim of time on my mission I didn't have any medication. I had totally forgotten how much harder it was for me to learn without it. I can remember having about 25 tablets left. You want to talk about a miser - ONLY during final exams or mid-terms would I take any. I would try to get the professors to have two exams on one day so I could take it and get two for the price of one. Anything to make this work, because I knew it was going to be all I could do just to get a couple of semesters of decent grades. It wasn't enough, because I wasn't getting enough information in during the week when I needed it.

During a time when I was walking in the business building one day, I noticed a bulletin board in there with a sign that said **WLD, We Learn Differently**. I'm sorry, but anybody who knows

anything about LD, I can assure you that the words ***"We Learn Differently"*** will catch your attention real quick. So I went over there and looked at it for a minute. Two days later they were going to have a little meeting upstairs in one of AUM's offices. I stopped by to see what was happening. I met Ms. Letta Gorman, I don't know if any of you know her, but she was an angel which really helped me.

To back up for a moment, I was told while I was in junior high that I would never graduate from high school. I passed that milestone. Also, they said if you ever pass high school you sure as heck will never graduate from college. At this point, they were almost right, but . . .

Ms. Gorman gave me the opportunity to take my tests untimed and in a room without distractions. With me, if I can hear a fluorescent lamp buzzing, or if there is a fly in the room, you can forget it; I've got to kill that thing; there is no way I can get anything done. Anything that moves--the worst thing you can do is put me on the inside row and have people going up and handing back their test and leaving. Just forget it; I'll just sit there!

Again, Ms. Gorman offered me this chance; she also offered me the opportunity to get tutors who knew how to teach students with my problem. That was a blessing from heaven. So I took her up on it.

I brought my documentation down and became a member of this Center. She gave me my first tutor because I was about to die in algebra. He was from Nigeria and his name was Jazim Modomiel. The first thing Ms. Gorman asked me was if I would be able to understand his accent. I said, "I don't care as long as he is teaching me math, that's all I care".

He not only was my best friend, but he was my savior. I got through algebra with a C . . . my dad almost passed out. I'd never made that high of a grade in algebra. I just barely squeaked by that precalculus stuff, but that's alright, I made the prettiest D you've ever seen in your life.

The big goal in my life was to get through math, because I knew that was the one block that was going to keep me from graduating. It was a massive weight that was taken off my shoulders. I was able to take a test every time in that undisturbed environment. Even though friends would ask me, "Where are you at test taking time?", I would go into detail explaining it to them. After you've done that 3, 4, or 5 times, and when you are all in the same major area, everyone gets to know it, it's no big deal--"Trav is taking his test".

It was the untimed part that helped me the most. I generally finished within 15 or 20 minutes or, maybe half an hour, of the same time limit that the regular test was in. It was the threat of the time that killed me. Because I had this - I don't know - my brain just locks up and stops under that much pressure. I was killing the professors because I could answer every question that they could ask me in class. They would look at my test results though and could not believe this was the same person. I was barely keeping afloat.

At this point, let me now return you back to North Carolina. My pediatrician had moved on, but he had a young man in his practice when I was a boy, who took over his place. His name was Dr. Michaels. Unlike my former pediatrician, Dr. Michaels was seeing older rather than smaller kids, and this is where the transition comes in. In fact, Dr. Michaels was taking care of the college aged and those young adults that were getting into their working years.

He realized that they needed medication too. So, due to the fact that I was the guinea pig returned home, he wanted to see how this worked with me.

We got a hold of my old records. We got out the prescription and he put me back on Dexedrine. Ladies and gentlemen, you can look at my report cards. If you put them like graphs, this is kind of flat here and then they just spike straight up. I'm a big believer in that stuff. Because I can testify that I can sit down and read something and it will stick. It will at least stick long enough for me to get through Dr. Judd's Marketing class and keep going. That helped me, and it was the only way I was going to get through college. So the pieces were put together for me.

On that trip, I went back to my former high school to see the old guidance counselor and my sister went with me. Speaking of my sister, she is 30-years-old and she also was told she would never graduate. For the record, she graduated from East Carolina University with her degree in Criminal Justice, and her Masters Degree in Public Administration. Now, my sister is an officer in the Greensboro Police Department.

The transitions that a child has to go through to be their own advocate is what you need to learn. I don't know which positions most of you are in, if you are in teaching, or if you are in guidance, or if you work for the state or work with a student or a parent. But I can tell you that each child is different. Each one learns on their wave link.

My sister and I also went back together to the high school counselor. She was right in the middle of handling a whole bunch of problems with some students. We walked in and she looked at us. She recognized me, due to the fact that I was a little younger and was closer to graduation. She noticed me and she said, "Travis." We both just reached out and gave each other a big hug. So we began teaching her and telling her how our lives had developed. My sister is now going back and helping her help the high school students, because they needed somebody to say, "Hey, I made it." That, to me, is what is most important; those of us who made it and got through school.

My Transition from College to Work

I thought it was terrible in college because it was so hard. But, nevertheless, I got out of college, yet was quick to learn that this working stuff is not as easy as I thought it was going to be.

I work for an international office automation business, and I'm in the voice products division. You can ask my parents; sales was all I ever wanted to be in since I was a little boy. The reason I've always wanted to be in sales is because as a child I thought I was dumb. I didn't think that I could be smart enough to get through college, and I knew that I had some friends, men that were in Life at the time, that they didn't go to college, but they were making enough money to earn a living at sales. Mom and Dad always kind of joked and kidded at me and said that I was a con artist in the family anyway and that was the perfect occupation for me. So I made that choice early. I went ahead and got my marketing degree from AUM, and that is when I chose to stay with it.

My father got into Toastmasters. He's the one who taught me how to give speeches and such. In church, he made me stand up and constantly give little boy talks so that I would not be afraid to do that. I really didn't understand the reason for it until I got the chance to start telling my story to kids, not just the adults.

Now that I'm out on my own, Mom's not there, Dad's not there, and so you've got to do it all yourself. Now I want to give you another piece of information. On my last job interview, they finally gave me this job. During the interview, my boss was opening up the yellow pages and he was having a really difficult time reading them. He turned to me with a very strange expression on his face and he said, "Have you ever heard of dyslexia?" I snickered, but I couldn't hold it back. He looked at me real funny and I told him, "I've heard a little bit about it. First, tell me what you know, then I'll 'fess up." So he told me His Story.

He was thirty-eight years old when he found out. He had to find out in probably the toughest situation that I can imagine. He was selling some new dictation equipment to a doctor. He was sitting there and the doctor kept asking him to read the customer agreement that they have. He would try to read it and he couldn't. He would keep trying and the doctor kept pushing him to read the customer agreement. He was making my boss very, very mad. It finally got to the point where he couldn't do it. His frustration just popped out the top. So he put his stuff in his briefcase, closed it and excused himself and got out. He said, "I've never been so mad and furious in all my life." He went on, "I was almost to my car when I could hear the doctor in the background running just as hard as this doctor could run, apologizing as he was coming up to him." The doctor said, "I realize I embarrassed you and I apologize for that. I want to tell you why I ask you to read for me and why I was so persistent. I realize reading is difficult for you. Do you know reading is difficult for you?"

The doctor was very knowledgeable about dyslexia. He had caught the fact that my boss was switching letters, numbers, and he was switching whole words and moving them on the page. The doctor was following along as my boss was trying to read. He told my boss, "Have you ever been tested for dyslexia?" My boss had never heard of it--"No" he said, "what is it?" So the doctor began to tell him.

My boss thinks it is almost too late for him. Now all of a sudden he hires this person (me) and he had no idea, all he knew was that I had worked for the Center for Special Services as a peer counselor and that I had helped people in situations down on the AUM campus. What he didn't realize was that I also was a client. I wouldn't tell him anything at first because I was sure what his feelings were. Then, when I began to tell him my situation his whole demeanor changed.

My boss thinks it is almost too late for him. Now all of a sudden he hires this person (me) and he had no idea. All he knew was that I had worked for the Center for Special Services as a peer counselor and that I had helped people in situations down on AUM campus. What he didn't realize was that I was also a client. I wouldn't tell him anything, because I was sure what his feelings were. Then when I began to tell him my situation his whole demeanor changed.

Now that I have been in the office a few weeks, my co-workers come up and say, "You have been so good to come here." They tell me that Mr. W. has calmed down. They asked me, "What have you done." I said, "I don't know, he's got one of the crew here with him who is just like him." They said, "No, no, no, you don't have the temper that Mr. W. has." I explained to them so that everybody in the office knew that you did not ask Mr. W. to read anything.

He's got a couple of secretaries who work there who, bless their hearts, are wonderful ladies. They put everything on the tape recorder or dictation equipment; this is one of the pieces of equipment that he uses. They will tell him things that have to be done and they'll write it on a calendar, but don't write it down; because he'll mess it up. We both sit back and laugh about how we are learning to make compensation for ourselves as we go into the workplace.

I almost feel bad for him because of the fact that he looks at me and he sees somebody who is young enough that when learning disability was discovered and began to be understood, I was lucky enough to be in the beginning of it and catch the wave and ride it so that I could get the benefit that he didn't have.

As I was talking to him--unfortunately or I guess fortunately--our business division had done so well that he won a trip to Switzerland, otherwise he would be here tonight. He now is sitting somewhere in the Alps, yodeling and eating something. I told him as long as he brings me back some chocolate, it was okay. He said, "Trav, when I get back, you and I need to sit down and talk. I need to talk to you about my son."

He began to tell me about his boy and it is like looking into a mirror in my own youth. I was constantly in trouble. The doctor used to tell my parents this one will be in here more often with cuts, bruises, scrapes, you name it -- and I was. I've got scars all over me to prove it. My parents kind of worried about it, but he also said, "This one will be another challenge, that this one will see things that other children won't.

A Few Closing Messages

I give these talks, speeches, classes, seminars, or whatever you want to call them because I owe so many tutors for their time and I owe a lot of teachers for theirs. Some of them didn't understand it, but they tried anyway.

I've got one little story of my fourth grade teacher. Bless her heart, she didn't understand it, she didn't know how to help me even though she tried. She was kind of clovis on how to do it. She also lived in my neighborhood. When we went back home to North Carolina, we went by and saw her and she came up and gave me a huge hug. And she said, "Now I know what you were going through." They had adopted a little boy when I was in high school and he is now 13 or 14 years old and, oh, is he LD! Now she had first-hand experience of learning everything that she had no understanding of with me - - and, she felt guilty. I told her, "Don't feel guilty, just put it to good use; I made it."

The kids who are learning disabled are survivors. If there are any teachers out there tonight, watch these kids -- watch them like a hawk, because to survive was the school experience for me, and it is for them too. They are short tempered and very quick to use that temper, they are under a severe amount of pressure just to survive. It is just a survival instinct. It is not a matter of the person going to school, it is a matter of a person just trying to survive.

The transitions that individuals have to go through to be their own advocate is what you need to learn. I don't know which positions most of you are in, if you are in teaching, or if you are in guidance, or if you work for the state, or work with a student or a parent. But, I can tell you that **each person with LD is different**. Each one learns on their wave link. Thank you for letting me share **My Story** with you tonight.

I don't know which positions most of you are in, if you are in teaching, or if you are in guidance, or if you work for the state, or work with a student or a parent. But, I can tell you that each person with LD is different. Each one learns on their wave link.

Kim Witherington's Story

My name is Kim Witherington. My major in college is accounting and I will be graduating at the end of this summer.

Both of my brothers had a learning disability. When my brother was diagnosed he was five years old. My mother use to take him for help to the Rotary Clinic in Mobile when he was six years old. He was writing letters backwards and nobody at that time understood what that was all about. But, my family has always known what LD is. My mother can really discuss it; she knows all about it. My mother was the one to go up to the state capitol and sit on the steps to get it into the school system. That is what helped, my parents backing me up.

I was first diagnosed with learning disabilities when I was in the fourth grade. Probably the reason that I was diagnosed was that, like I said, my brother has a learning disability. Believe me, it took some fighting for them to get me to the place to get tested.

Both of my brothers had a learning disability. My mother was the one to go up to the state capitol and sit on the steps to get it into the school system. That is what helped, my parents backing me up. I have been sponsored through vocational rehabilitation. There is Mr. Jim Brewer, and he was a wonderful help.

I got a good background while I was in high school. The school systems that I had were great. I had great learning disability teachers through grade school and high school. I really didn't have trouble then, because I studied and did my homework while my friends were out playing.

I first went to Daffney Schools and then went to Fairhope High School. My learning disability teachers taught me how to learn. I don't feel like learning disabled is a proper title because I can learn and I have shown that I can learn. I got a test back this week from one of those teachers that told me that I should be proud of my grade since I was one of the top students in the class.

I did run into some complications in high school though. When I first entered high school, for example, I had one learning disability teacher that told me that I would never graduate. She didn't really have confidence in me, since she had my older brother with a learning disability and he wasn't willing to try as hard. So I had those type complications.

Nevertheless, I had one learning disability teacher that worked with me real wellfor the last two years of high school. She got me through high school and was a real encouragement to me. In fact, I ended up graduating as the Outstanding Senior.

When I entered college I wasn't sure if that was the thing for me to do. I started out in a junior college taking a few classes and then I decided what I wanted to do--to go into accounting. My learning disability is in reading, but I work real well with numbers. Of course, that was my decision to go into accounting.

Probably one of my biggest challenges was when I entered Auburn University at Montgomery. When you say that you have a learning disability, teachers think that you can't read or that you are unable to do the work. That's why I have had some fights with some teachers. I've had a few professors, for example, that believe when you have your test read you are cheating because you are one on one with somebody. Right now, I have a professor that films all of my test because she believes something could go on and she doesn't like it because she is not present.

Also, I had one professor in the fall quarter--very close to my graduation--tell me that due to my grammar, and since I don't speak properly, she feels that I should not graduate. She is telling me this after I have only about six classes left. Thanks to my counselor though. He sat her down and explained what a learning disability is. Frankly, these teachers just don't know. That has been one of my biggest problems.

I am learning--it is not like I am unable to learn. That is the biggest trial, you know, that people just don't know what learning disabilities is. You see, when you tell someone you have a learning disability, there is a label put on you and they just assume that you can't make it . . . I am not going to let anyone hold me back.

I am learning--it is not like I am unable to learn. That is the biggest trial, you know, that people just don't know what learning disabilities is. You see, when you tell someone you have a learning disability, there is a label put on you and they just assume that you can't make it. Like, with the label they just say "She has a learning disability! "Now, though, we are finally telling them what it is. Also, we have told them the laws that they have to go by. They have no choice.

I have been sponsored through vocational rehabilitation while in college. Mr. Jim Brewer, my rehabilitation counselor, has been a wonderful help. There have been times when I have gotten as low as D's and I've been ready to quit school. But I have had people like him (and a few others) always encouraging me. For sure, my mother and father have always stood behind me. They've just encouraged me to go on.

Now that I am about to graduate, my next challenge is entering the real world. The next step will be to take the CPA test. I've got to see about having that read to me. Being a state test, though, I don't know what I will have to go through. But, I am going to try and see what it will take to have that test read to me. I am very motivated and I am determined to do just that. I am not going to let anyone hold me back.

Tracy Smith's Story

My name is Tracy Smith. I am classified as a senior at Auburn University at Montgomery and am a major in Criminal Justice.

I am the odd man out because I didn't go to high school. I wasn't identified as having a learning disability until I was 22 years old. Then, my field counselor, Linda Emsfinger encouraged me to go to college and helped me get in.

When I was in school, beginning as early as kindergarten, I would be sent home because I didn't get the letters right. Also, the teachers said that I was to much of a behavioral problem.

> ***If any of you are teachers can I give you a word of advice. Don't try to teach by humiliation. I have had teachers tell me, "I am going to make you stand and read." LD to them was lazy and dumb. "You just don't want to learn." I looked at one teacher and said , "Yea, I want to be stupid the rest of my life, digging ditches is my goal in life maybe." In eighth grade I quit school.***

My dad is my best friend. He has always been wonderful and encouraging. He would always tell me "Well, if you write the letters backwards just turn the paper over and let them read it backwards. It would be right side up." My dad taught me early on that the world looks at things backward to you.

My first grade teacher would tell me to stop writing my e's backwards and that I was doing that for attention. She would go erase the board and tell me to write it correctly. It would just kill me to try and get the c's, b's, and d's going the right way. I was horrible, and the teacher's thought it was a behavior problem.

My dad and mother were very encouraging, but my mother died when I was 9 years old. Because my dad was in the military I remember going to four or five different schools in just one year. I used to have a lot of anger against teachers because after I had gotten a routine down with one teacher I would then have to get a new one.

An LD student is probably the best dramaturgical (used as a sociological term) because we can feel people out: "Oh, this teacher is going to be easy--we can make this class." So we do a little routine, like "Oh, she's cute, she's funny." Then, however, when they ask you to read a book and you sit there and are kind of doing this routine, they say, "She is a behavior problem."

So, I learned the system early. I learned that I got out of work if I played a role or a routine. I remember that use to go down and talk to the principal when I was in the fourth grade. I'll never forget it--I use to talk to him about fishing and found out that he enjoyed it. And, I found out all I could about fishing. I would get out of class for two hours to learn about fishing and then he'd send me back.

I had a teacher in fifth grade tell me, "Just sit there and be quiet and I'll give you a passing grade. I'll give you a C if you will just sit there and be quiet so that I can teach the other students."

In the sixth grade I made straight F's. Do you know what they did? Instead of them saying that he seems to have learning disability, do you know what they did? The principal of the seventh grade said, "We are going to put you in the seventh grade and here is what we are going to do." He took a bright marker and went down all the F's and made straight A's. He said "I don't want to see you in my office, I know your reputation and I don't want to see you in my office." Even though my record showed that I had straight F's, they let me in the seventh grade.

I quit school in eighth grade. If any of you are teachers I can I give you a word of advice. Don't try to teach by humiliation. I have had teachers tell me, "I am going to make you stand and read." To them, LD was lazy and dumb. "You just don't want to learn." I looked at one teacher and said , "Yea, I want to be stupid the rest of my life, like digging ditches is my goal in life."

Most parents would have screamed at the notion that their son or daughter was quitting school in the eight grade. Fortunately, at that time I was working with my dad delivering papers at night. It was the Miami Herald, and we made around five or six hundred dollars a week delivering papers, so I didn't think I needed school.

Unfortunately, my dad married a teacher. UH!!! It was terrible. One of the first things she said to my dad about me was, "Tracy can't read." He then said, "Oh sure she can read, she can get by." Mom is now going "no, no, no, you don't understand, she can't READ things like the newspaper." That is part of my disability. I would start reading the paper and I would get to a word that I didn't know and I would replace it and I would throw in a word that I thought it should be.

A lot of people say dyslexia is when you invert the letters and numbers and that is it. Well, a lot of times dyslexia is when you drop out a sentence of say 16 words. I may lose some of those words; they just float off into a never never land that isn't there.

Then my mom spent one year with us on this matter and she came to the wonderful realization that my father also had a learning disability. My dad can supervise 28 men, know what they all are doing, even know what the manhole cover is in downtown Columbus, Georgia. But, he will sit there and say, "Organization, how do you spell that?" He has the same problem that I do with spelling. Then when I got into college, I discovered that no one can spell. The average college student-this is the truth- has a sixth grade spelling level. That is a sad commentary to the education system.

My mom was teaching at a christian school. They sent me there, Brother Frank Testin, I'll never forget this man. The first day in class we had to read a Bible verse and I can't read it. He tells me to pick out a verse and I opened the Bible up and I did this routine:

Me: **"Yes, Mastah." I thought he was going to send me to the principal but he didn't. After class he said,**

Teacher: **"Tracy, can I see you."**

Me: **I said okay, okay, we are going to get this down now, get it out of the way. I'm going to get punished.**

Teacher: **"Tracy I am going to tell you something and I want you to take this to heart. God commanded me to love you, cause there's no other way I would. You are disruptive, you are funny, you are intelligent."**

Me: **I am thinking this guy is giving me compliments, this guy is a better con-artist than I am. He said, " We are going to send you three hours a week to Mrs. Rutledge." It was with him that I began learning to read one on one.**

I graduated from high school with my GED in 1985. I went to take my GED, and I will never forget it. I was working at that time as a nurse's aide. I had been an aide since I was seventeen years old. Before I got out of the car, I took off my glasses and I set them on the seat. She gave me the test and I sat there and I said, "Look, I just broke my glasses and I cannot see this page, would you read this to me." She wasn't suppose to, but she did. I got a very high score in math and science. I conned my way; she gave me the test verbally.

My sister Kathy worked for Dr. Segear. I was 20 years old at this time. She told me about a vocational rehabilitation counselor, Linda Emsfinger, and said that she wanted me to talk to her. I didn't want to. My sister then said, "Do you want to spend the rest of your life working on your feet. You know, like dad, who works two jobs during the week and one on the weekend, trying to make sure that we had a good life." I love my dad and my dad is one that said, "You are smart enough to go to college, you are smart Tracy." I never heard him say, "Tracy you are dumb."

I didn't want to go to school. I knew the professors were going to tell me that I was dumb. So I went and saw this wonderful lady, Linda. I say this everytime I talk about this. Linda Emsfinger sent me to a psychiatrist to take an IQ test. The psychiatrist said that I had poor reading ability but found no problems with dyslexia or learning disabilities. I remember that day, it was in Valley Hospital. I said, "Linda, I know when I cannot read and write there is something wrong."She said, "Okay, I am going to sent you to Montgomery." A psychometrists did a test and a psychologists did the evaluation of the test. I was profoundly learning disabled.

My verbal skills are very high and I am an oral learner. That is how I got by at work. I have been a nurse's aide and an orderly in a hospital, and I also worked as a head cook in

a state facility. I have worked in a state facility as a nurse's aide working with the severely handicapped. I knew that I was smart.

Linda sent me off to Montgomery to Easter Seals for them to test me and to learn what kind of school I needed. I kept saying that I wanted to go to school. They then sent me to a wonderful little lady called Letta Gorman.

This woman changed my life. She taught me these little words-self advocate. She did something very unusual, she brought out this packet and said," This is the 504 Law, let me explain it to you. You have a right to get proctored." I said, "What is proctoring?"

I also met Carl Nowell, who encouraged me and said that maybe in a two-year cosmetology that they will pass you along even if you get a C or a 2.0 and you are good at doing hair. I said, "No" and so did Linda.

I got to go to Auburn University at Montgomery, the Center of Rehabilitation at AUM is a wonderful place. They taught me that wonderful word "self-advocate" and about the 504 Laws. Then they introduced me to WLD--**We Learn Differently**. It is wonderful. It didn't say that we are disabled. It just says that we have a disorder and we learn differently.

The transition from my Freshman year was terrible at the time. Now I go crying in Gerri's office, literally falling to pieces. Just recently I went to her crying that I had made a 79 on a test. Gerri said, "Traci what will your average be in the class with this 79?" I said, "An A." Gerri asked what I was upset about because I still had an A. I learned that the stress of studying, walking around with note cards, notebooks, studying in the elevators, is a wall. I hit it my sophomore year, I started having convulsive seizures. I have a seizure disorder, which makes it not a good idea to be stressed out.

A lot of it for me is getting over the frustration. It is like getting bogged down in water and you can't move. How I have gotten through that? By having my first internship last quarter at the Montgomery Court House. I got out in the field and I now am learning about law enforcement and what I want to do.

I remember my advisor asked me why I was in criminal justice with my learning disability and seizure disorder. She said to me jokingly that it was the one occupation that has the highest suicide rate and I was going into it with a seizure disorder. I told her that I really wanted to do this, I enjoy law enforcement, and I am really good at it.

I have a high GPA and I am very proud of that. Learning to study wasn't hard for me. Since I didn't go through high school, I learned from scratch and I didn't have to relearn. Letta

Gorman really helped me out in the Center at that time. Then Letta told me that fateful day that the Center was getting a new Coordinator and her name is Gerri Wolfe. My thoughts were that she won't understand LD, she is not LD, why do you want to bring someone new on board. Then I met Gerri, and, she didn't just listen to me, but she helped me as well. I remember when I went to her saying that I was failing out of school, because my GPA was 3.2. She used her favorite saying and said, "Let's re-assess this."

My problem is <u>not</u> studying. My dad will call and ask if I have taken my medicine, and am I NOT studying. Most parents call and ask if you are studying and not doing drugs.

Gerri really helped my get my schedule in order by getting the proper tutors, studying one on one, and slowing down. I am a perfectionist, which some people think is not good because a lot of times I can't get something done because I am afraid of failing. I procrastinate on things because if I cannot do it perfectly the first time I am ready to chunk it. A lot of it for me is getting over the frustration. It is like getting bogged down in water and you can't move. How I have gotten through that? By having my first internship last quarter at the Montgomery Court House. I got out in the field and I now am learning about law enforcement and what I want to do.

Mark Pope's Story

My name is Mark Pope. I was diagnosed in the first grade with Dyslexia. I was lucky I was diagnosed early. I took my major classes at regular school, but went to a special school called ACLD up to the seventh grade.

By the time I entered the seventh grade, we found out about a reading and math center, which was like a tutoring program after school. Fortunately, my parents had the money to pay for it. That is where I got big results because they would drill us, and drill us, and drill us in our spelling, reading out loud, and other things.

I had to go to regular school everyday all day, and then I would go off to this school two or three days a week. That meant real long hours, especially since you still had school work to do after you got home. I did that routine all the way up through the 11th grade. Then, I went to my parents and asked them for one year by myself and they wouldn't have to do anything for me.

I was then sponsored by vocational rehabilitation, and my counselor told me about Auburn University at Montgomery. I checked it out and found that they had a great program. I have been very successful. I am just six quarters from graduating.

The Learning Disabilities Program we had in our school was ok, but it really wasn't that great. My senior year, they put us with a teacher that didn't know anything about learning disabilities. So a fellow student and myself had to basically run the whole program. However, we had a few teachers that would really help. But, we also had a lot of teachers that wouldn't. I didn't know then that I could use the laws to get the teachers to help me. Therefore, my high school grades are not really what my full potential is.

I was then sponsored by vocational rehabilitation, and my counselor told me about Auburn University at Montgomery. I checked it out and found that they had a great program. I started there and so far I have made pretty good grades. I have my test proctored, I occasionally get text on tape and I get tutoring. All of that really helps me. I have been very successful. I am just six quarters from graduating.

A Window to Alabama's Commitment

The 1993 conference (as well as the previous two) focused mainly on considerations and programs in Alabama. Specifically, one of three program objectives was to:

> **increase the participant's knowledge of transition issues, problems, resources, and programs, especially as they pertain to Alabama.**

We openly solicited conference presenters for the first time. The result of that invitation is that 12 of the 19 concurrent sessions were presented by people who wanted to formally tell others about some of the exciting and innovative things that they were doing. These and other invited presenters were field-based practitioners, as well as local, regional, and state-level coordinators of their respective educational and service delivery programs. In this sense, much of the program "belonged" to those most directly responsible for providing transition services. Alabama's exemplary programs, demonstrated transition models for practice, curricula materials, and the like were a central part of the program (see listing below).

In essence, this annual event is meant to be yours. It is a learning forum in which you can "show" and "tell" your programs, "teach" and "learn" with one another your practices, "explore" and "discuss" the problems and issues with which you are faced, and "share" and "celebrate" your victories together. Once again, we will strongly encourage people in the field to "volunteer" to be on the program for the upcoming conference, that is scheduled for:

February 23-25, 1994

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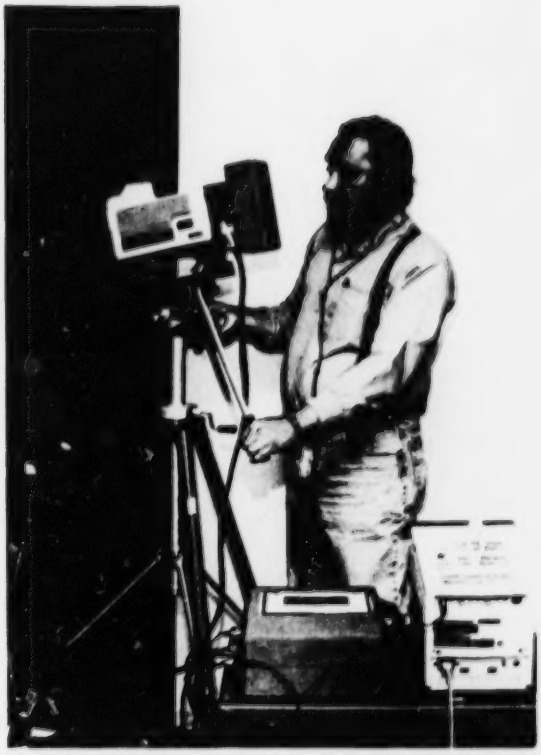

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CULLMAN COUNTY'S TRANSITION PROGRAM
Project BOSS

Kaye Hilton, Charles Clemmons, and Dorothy Falkner

Project BOSS serves eleven students with disabilities, ages 17-21, enrolled at the Cullman County Child Development Center. This Center is a public day school facility operated by the Cullman County Commission on Education. It is the least restrictive environment for these students with intelligence quotients ranging from 28-49 with major deficits in adaptive behavior.

Project BOSS is empowering these students with disabilities through an individualized transition curriculum. It is bringing together the students, parents, teachers, Vocational Rehabilitation, Special Education, and local businesses in a continuing program which is leading to integration of individuals with disabilities into the community. Based firmly on the belief that the best method of proving the capability of an individual is to provide that person with an opportunity, Project BOSS is paving the way to a brighter future for the program participants.

Project BOSS is empowering these students with disabilities through an individualized transition curriculum. It is bringing together the students, parents, teachers, Vocational Rehabilitation, Special Education, and local businesses in a continuing program which is leading to integration of individuals with disabilities into the community.

Project BOSS is comprised of four components. These components are: (1) Assessment, (2) Classroom Instruction/Training, (3) School-based/Community-based Work Experience and (4) Parent Transition Awareness. These four components are not rigid stages but instead are as integrated as necessary to meet the individual needs of each participant.

Component 1 - Assessment

Assessment of vision/hearing, intelligence, adaptive behavior, achievement and occupational therapy are all pivotal parts of Component 1. Situational evaluations are conducted formally and informally while trainees are in instruction, school-based and community-based components of the program. The intent of the wide variety of evaluations is to assimilate a comprehensive profile to aid in the development of appropriate adult outcomes for participants. Locally developed checklists are utilized on a daily basis to evaluate trainees' performance during school-based and community-based work experience.

Observations and a variety of interventions are used to aid trainees in acquiring and refining necessary work and work-related skills.

Component 2 - Classroom Instruction/Training

With the implementation of Project BOSS, the traditional classroom yields to a variety of instructional settings on the Center's campus. Included are the school grounds, cafeteria, baths, school laundry room, and the Prevocational classroom. This facility is equipped with a kitchen, living area, cosmetology, personal grooming and hygiene supplies and sewing machines. The accessibility and utilization of these areas make it easy to replicate any function necessary for daily living.

Students also continue to receive instruction in math, reading, and language arts in the traditional classroom setting, with emphasis on life skills. The use of calculators to perform simple addition and subtraction is incorporated into the math curriculum and is extended to include instruction in using calculators to make simple purchases. Field trip experience at a local grocery store to make purchases using the calculator helps trainees to generalize this skill into everyday life. A basic sight word program is used to teach functional word skills. These skills are being reinforced by the use of numerous computer programs to provide instruction and remediation.

Other classroom instruction includes reading, reading comprehension, sentence composition and structure, handwriting (manuscript and cursive), money, time, and basic math facts. Again, the emphasis is placed on more functional aspects of these skills. Many skills are reinforced during school-based and community-based work experience (i.e., reading signs, labels, schedules, menus and following oral directions).

A multiplicity of work-related skills are also covered during classroom instructional time. Filling out a job application and interviewing are covered on a weekly basis. Other areas of instruction are telephone skills, making introductions, speaking before a group, current events, using a time clock, grooming and appearance, taking criticism, following written and oral directions, efficient use of time, and increasing attention span. Many methods are implemented in the presentation of these skills. Teacher-made worksheets, purchased workbooks and materials, and an assortment of applicable computer programs are used extensively in instruction.

Component 3 - School-based/Community-based Work Experience

Through a cooperative effort involving the school staff, assessment team, participants' teachers, special education coordinator and counselor, many school-based employment opportunities have been devised. School-based work experiences include: sweeping and mopping the lunchroom and hallways, cleaning windows and doors, washing and drying lunchroom tables, laundry (washing, folding, and putting away towels and washcloths), and vacuuming welcome mats and classrooms.

Each week, students apply for a job from a list of those available, submit an application, and participate in an interview. After review of applications and interview results, the project director sends the trainees letters informing them of their job assignments for the

following week. Evaluations of work experiences are conducted daily by the project director using the locally developed checklists. Analysis and review of these evaluations often lead to retraining in areas indicated as deficient and commendation for areas of outstanding work.

Another element in the school-based work component is the establishment of a mailroom service for the Child Development Center. Trainees are given the responsibility of distributing and collecting mail for both inside and outside the Center. Each day, trainees deliver mail to all offices and classrooms on the Center's campus. This involves retrieving the daily mail from the mailbox after delivery by the postal service, stamping incoming mail with the month/date stamp, sorting and distributing mail in the mail room area, and delivering the mail to boxes posted outside each office and classroom. This task is usually accomplished during the afternoon. Each morning, mailroom workers collect mail from outgoing boxes at each office and deposit it in the Center's mailbox. Bulk mailing by the Center is folded, placed in envelopes, sealed and stamped by mailroom trainees.

The mailroom is also the drop point for the copy service initiated by the program trainees. Teachers and office personnel submit items to be copied at the Center's copier. This service is provided on a first-come, first-served basis. After items are copied, they are returned by trainees to the appropriate person.

Pasquale's Pizza, Cullman Athletic Club, and Peoples Bank are the three sites that were selected for the community-based work component. The diversity of these businesses offers a variety of work experiences while allowing for the differing skill levels of the individual trainees. The proximity of these sites to the Center allows for minimal time for travel to and from work.

A preliminary visit is made by the project director to all sites. Employer/managers are provided information on characteristics, behaviors, methods of communication, and expectations and abilities, as well as limitations, of the trainees. During this initial visit, a *Transition Program Participating Agency Agreement* is signed and a time is scheduled for the trainees to tour business sites. This tour is conducted prior to beginning work assignments and provides the trainees with an opportunity to meet with prospective employers/managers. During the tour, trainees and job-site supervisors receive details of work responsibilities and location of needed supplies and equipment.

Based firmly on the belief that the best method of proving the capability of an individual is to provide that person with an opportunity, Project BOSS is paving the way to a brighter future for the program participants.

For the purpose of community-based work experiences, trainees are divided into three teams. Two teams are composed of four trainees each, while one team is composed of three trainees. A teacher/paraprofessional is assigned to each team to serve as job-site supervisor and accompany the team to the work

site each day to provide the degree of support needed by the individual trainees. Job-site supervisors are also delegated the responsibility of evaluating each trainee daily and act as liaison between the program director and community-based job-site employer/manager. Work experiences are conducted Monday through Thursday at Pasquale's and the Cullman Athletic Club. Training is only conducted on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday at the Peoples Bank location due to the bank being closed on Wednesdays. At the end of four weeks of training, teams rotate to a new community-based work site. This arrangement gives each trainee an opportunity to participate at each of the three sites during the twelve-week community-based work experience.

Trainees are assigned specific tasks and monitored closely at the job site by their supervisor. The use of verbal and physical cues and prompts are extensively used in the job-site supervisors during the training sessions. Trainees are evaluated daily by the job-site supervisor utilizing a checklist similar to the one used during school-based work experiences. By the fourth week of each rotation, supervisors are able to basically fade all prompts and cues. Trainees are working relatively independently.

Employer/managers are asked to evaluate the program on a weekly basis through the use of a *Program Evaluation Questionnaire*. These evaluations are used by the program director and job-site supervisors to modify the training sessions as necessary. Throughout the twelve-week training session, employer/manager evaluations have always been in the Excellent range, with no additions/deletions of tasks and no conferences requested.

Component 4 - Parent Transition Awareness

An essential part of the project is Parent Transition Awareness. Through monthly meetings, parents are afforded an opportunity to gain knowledge which will help them as their child enters the adult work world.

An essential part of the project is Parent Transition Awareness. Through monthly meetings, parents are afforded an opportunity to gain knowledge which will help them as their child enters the adult work world. Training and information has been provided in a variety of areas of interest. Meetings address areas of concern as expressed by parents at a Transition Orientation meeting. Topics of interest are: trainees' progress in the program, individual strengths and weaknesses, availability of services, wills/trusts, legal issues, financial planning, living arrangements, and medical issues. Representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation, Social Security, and ARC are guest speakers. The program director and special education counselor serve as instructors for these meetings.

One objective of Project BOSS is to develop an open line of communication between parents, students, teachers, and community-based work site employers/managers. This ensures optimum success for all participants. Results of this project are noted in a greater

community awareness of the needs of students with disabilities, an innovative method of education and creation of opportunities to meet the needs of participants. The ultimate goal of Project BOSS is to facilitate society in the development of skills and understanding in viewing all persons as more alike than different. It is to this end that the trainees, program director, special education staff, parents, and community-based work-site employers/managers are united in making Project BOSS a success.

Jefferson County's Program on Functional Assessment in Transition

Beverly Lavender

For the past year, a group of us in Jefferson County has been involved in developing a "functional assessment" program for our secondary students with disabilities (Committee members are listed at end of paper). This effort is an outgrowth of a Task Force on Functional Assessment in Transition that was sponsored by Alabama's Division Rehabilitation Services. In addition, the foundation underlying this initiative is partly based on a paper entitled "Assessment in Transition: A Functional Definition and Collaborative Program for Practice." This paper was developed through the Task Force and recently published (Browning & Brechin, 1993).

The committee will further develop a transition profile or a functional assessment report which will provide a simple and easy-to-use format for individual education plan (IEP)/individual transition plan (ITP) development. The need for appropriate functional assessment leading to a functional curriculum has been directly related to the positive employment and community living outcomes desired for all students with mental retardation.

Purpose

A major purpose of this project is to develop a "transition profile" that includes a "functional" assessment for individual and program planning that will enable the EMR, TMR, and MH secondary students in Jefferson County to obtain a more positive community integration across the daily living, personal-social and occupational guidance and preparation domains. Also, the intent is to facilitate an efficient cooperative process by which a duplication of like services will no longer be common practice in the area of eligibility determination and evaluation. Specifically, the objectives of this project are to:

1. select specific functional assessment instrument(s) which assess all life domains (utilizing teachers, parents, students, etc., as informants);

2. provide in-service training on use of selected functional assessment instrument(s) to special education teachers, vocational teachers, counselors, parents, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and the student;

3. development of a plan to coordinate the implementation and annual review of each student's functional assessment;

4. develop Transition Profile/Functional Assessment Report format to be used in IEP development; and

5. development of systematic plan to coordinate the transition IEP process utilizing the development of computer software.

Activities

The program is now in a pilot phase and includes many developing activities. Each of these is briefly described below.

Reviewing and selecting instruments

During the first project year, committee members will review a wide variety of functional assessment instruments. A primary concern will be to select functional assessment instruments which can be easily interpreted and utilized by professionals in special education, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, parents, and the many community agencies which provide transition service to youth with disabilities. The criteria for selection of functional assessment instruments will be as follows:

1. Was the instrument carefully developed, field-tested, and revised before being presented for widespread use?

2. Are the items on the instrument appropriate for the types of students being assessed?

3. Is the scaling of the items appropriate for the types of questions being addressed?

4. Is the content of the instrument appropriate for the program decisions being made?

5. Can the assessments be accomplished in a reasonable amount of time?

6. Can the assessments be interpreted easily by all relevant stakeholders, including students, parents, and professionals?

7. Is the cost of the instrument reasonable?

8. Is the instrument broadly applicable to a wide variety of people, or is it focused on a specific type of person?

9. Does the instrument cover a broad array of relevant contents, or is it focused on a narrow amount of relevant contents?

In-Service Training

Upon selection of those desired functional assessment instruments, the next phase of activity will focus on in-service training of all transition team members within the committee and the pilot sites selected. It is most important that the teachers, parents, and students who will be utilizing the functional assessment instruments be included in the training. An effort

to analyze the benefits of assessment as it relates to individual and program planning will be a major goal.

Functional Assessment Report

An analysis of all available assessment information on individual students will be utilized in the functional assessment process. The committee will further develop a transition profile or a functional assessment report which will provide a simple and easy-to-use format for individual education plan (IEP)/individual transition plan (ITP) development. The need for appropriate functional assessment leading to a functional curriculum has been directly related to the positive employment and community living outcomes desired for all students with mental retardation.

Tracking System

Development of a tracking system for each individual student will begin with the functional assessment. The functional assessment information will be recorded on the transition profile. The transition profile will assist in the development of goals and objectives for the individual education/transition plan. A plan to coordinate the implementation and annual review of each IEP/TEP will be developed for the pilot site. It is the intent of the committee to develop computer software with the assistance of a programmer to track the transition planning for the students. This software program would be shared with all transition team members in order to streamline the access of information and deliver appropriate transition services in a timely fashion. A computerized system would assist in our efforts to avoid duplication of services and minimize the total cost of realizing positive employment and community living outcomes for our students with mental retardation.

Throughout the funding year, each phase of development will be field-tested and revised within the pilot sites. Students included in the pilot are categorized as educable mentally retarded, trainable mentally retarded, multiple disabled. Special education teachers, grades 9-12, vocational education teachers and counselors will participate from the pilot sites.

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Reference

Browning, P., & Brechin, C. (1993). Assessment in transition: A functional definition and collaborative program for practice. Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Bulletin. 26, 49-62.

Elmore County's Language Cookbook:

A Functional Curriculum for the Moderately to Severely Handicapped

Sandra Diaz, Mary Rudd, Kathryn Adams

For the past three years, the intermediate transition classrooms of moderately- to severely-handicapped students in Elmore County have been part of an integrative program of language and communication training. This multisensory model has proven to be the key to effectively inserting these disabled students into on-site work awareness activities through efficient amelioration of nonfunctional language patterns, as well as an increased peer and faculty interaction.

History

Even after the establishment of a functional curriculum in the intermediate classroom for students labeled T.M.R. and P.M.R., the communication skills were still poor. Students often spoke in single-word utterances with little connection to the context of the situation. Few, if any, questions were asked by students and a general acceptance or helplessness toward the environment pervaded the classroom. Perhaps even more discouraging was the atmosphere of unapproachable acceptance by staff and students within the school. While willing and interested in developing friendly relationships, the teacher often served as an interpreter for communication between the students and other school personnel. In order to actuate an on-site program of job awareness and skill application that would offer participants opportunities for self-advocacy and evaluation, a basis of communication had to be established.

The program has proved so effective that the developers have implemented portions of it with geriatric patients in local nursing facilities, traumatic head injury adults, and developmentally-delayed children, ages 2 to 5 years. In addition, it is currently being replicated in the Johnson County school system in Tennessee.

While researching the effectiveness of established programs, few were found that even addressed the needs of older students at the indicated intellectual level. The collective experiences of the collaborators included familiarity with Distar, Edmark, and Lotto Language programs. Although excellent programs, they were inappropriate for the functional goals of students aged 13 years to 21

years with little or no previous training. These curricula also proved to be too rigid, failing to provide the flexibility needed for integration of a functional core vocabulary.

Examination of functional and transitional materials revealed that this area of language development has been most often covered under the heading of social-interpersonal goals. Functional goals of students aged 13 years to 21 years with little or no previous training. These curricula also provided to be much too rigid, failing to provide the flexibility needed for integration of a functional core vocabulary.

Through a reciprocal question-and-answer format, multisensory compensatory cuing and integration throughout the daily instructional program, this language curriculum has proven proficient in improving expressive language concepts and more effective generalization of these skills into daily work and school situations.

Objectives

Historically, curriculum components for the moderate- to severely-handicapped have included either a concentration on a self-help skills and/or nonfunctional academic tasks. Recognizing that neither of these areas focused on the realistic present and future needs of the students, the primary objective for the language curriculum became functionality.

Also noted was that most social-interpersonal goals were evaluated through demonstration of communicative behaviors. For instance, assessments already used by the school system offered criteria such as "greets passersby appropriately," and "offers personal information at appropriate times". However, in order to be most effective, this program of language development had to break the traditional bonds of disassociated instruction to become an integral part of each student's daily program across all curriculum areas rather than focusing on one portion.

Wehman, Renzaglia, and Bates reinforced this premise in their book, Functional Living Skills for Moderately- and Severely-Handicapped Individuals. They stated,

> **"Because it is unlikely that moderately- and severely-handicapped persons can be taught to effectively respond to all possible situations, it is necessary to prioritize situations and skills that will most help a person to function successfully in an interpersonal context."**

The speech therapists along with the classroom teacher reviewed current testing results as well as anecdotal information. From this data, they concluded the foremost language difficulty to be lack of word retrieval skills. As these deficits most often occur due

to lack of organization of thoughts (Richard, Hanna, 1987), the need for compensatory cuing and *organizational training was evident (*the term "classification" was rejected as he data clearly showed that while the students could name objects within their environment, functional use of their present language skills was nonevident).

In addition, language training using compensatory cuing techniques should occur primarily at a specific period(s) of the instructional schedule. For greater generalization of these learned skills, intervention should be directed at prioritized moments of interpersonal interactions throughout daily tasks.

Other considerations included the traditional "speech time". Previously, this had been provided twice a week for approximately thirty minutes in a clinical setting. While certainly speech therapy had always been an integral part of the total program of transitional evaluation, the past efforts were inconsistent with current established needs. Plainly, the necessity of making communication a cornerstone of the entire daily instructional program provided for the greatest potential progress of each student. Thus, a multidisciplinary approach of curriculum development and integration was adopted.

Thirdly, to provide for easy replication, the training program had to offer a formula for individuality and flexibility of a core vocabulary. Even when students were grouped according to testing results or physical capabilities, the training process could not be so rigid that it would be useful to only a certain group. Rather, the process had to be a recipe for a finished product, but the ingredients were determined by the individual needs of each student.

Results

Through a reciprocal question-and-answer format, multisensory compensatory cuing and integration throughout the daily instructional program, the T.L.C. has proven proficient in improving expressive language concepts and more effective generalization of these skills into daily work and school situations.

Each student involved in the program is reevaluated every three years according to established state procedures. Using the accepted standardized assessments plus the EASIC (Evaluating Acquired Skills in Communication), and comparing results to previous scores, participants have shown improvement in expressive language scores between 10% to 40% over previous test results. Although receptive scores have shown little or no improvement, the training has been focused on expressive, not receptive, skills at the 13- to 21-year age level.

Teacher observations of progress include a once quiet classroom now filled with student-to-student communications -- previously-hesitant peers now readily coming into the room to discuss matters directly with classroom students -- on-site personnel quickly and effectively correcting difficulties with student work regardless of teacher presence. In addition, quarterly teacher, as well as student, self-evaluations of job awareness performance have shown marked improvement in student self-concept and advocacy skills. However, all communicative issues have not been resolved. Problems with staff discomfort over proximity to handicapped individuals or peer verbal and physical cruelty are still evident. Yet, these are

difficulties faced by most students and prospective employees. Perhaps with continued progress, even these issues may be resolved in the future.

The program has proved so effective with the initial grouping that the developers have implemented portions of T.L.C. with geriatric patients in local nursing facilities, traumatic head injury adults, and developmentally-delayed children, ages 2 to 5 years. In addition, T.L.C. is currently being replicated in the Johnson County school system in Tennessee. Other than the initial purchase of the booklet and indicated motivational or stimulatory materials, the program has remained true to the objectives of functionality and flexibility, and yet has required only a minimal investment to initiate.

Other than the initial purchase of the booklet and indicated motivational or stimulatory materials, the program has remained true to the objectives of functionality and flexibility, and yet has required only a minimal investment to initiate.

The success of this out-of-state effort to reproduce this model has been detrimentally affected only by the lack of classroom teacher willingness to change past nonfunctional instructional habits. As the curriculum was designed specifically for functional use, integration into an instructional environment not conducive to overall skill application and transitional goals would obviously minimize overall results. (Similar limitations to potential progress have been experienced in program development with the geriatric in a nursing home or institutional environment.)

Summary

Frustrated by the endless array of materials for language acquisition training that have often held little substance pertinent to the transition needs of the severely/moderately-retarded, three educators collaborated to develop THE LANGUAGE COOKBOOK curriculum.

T.L.C. is an aesthetic developmental sequence for functional language training and instructional integration that does not necessitate rigorous adherence to strict rules. While clinging to the requisite security of a recipe for progression, T.L.C. permits clinician flexibility in core vocabulary determination and individual functional needs.

Tuscaloosa's Consumers and Families Speak Up

Linda M. Nutt, Vicki Hicks Turnage, Elouise Woods, and Patricia Crowder

. . . the Alabama Developmental Disabilities Planning Council awarded a grant to Community Service Programs in West Alabama, Inc. to develop a person-center/family-centered transition model in the Tuscaloosa, Alabama, area. The project, called Futures Unlimited–

In recent years, many professionals serving individuals with disabilities have come to realize that many students are entering young adulthood unprepared to meet the challenges which lay before them upon completion of school. The Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Division of Mental Retardation has been keenly aware of the frequent lack of life focus or preparation for assuming an adult role by individuals with developmental disabilities. As a primary agent of day and residential services for individuals with mental retardation, the Division of Mental Retardation works with individuals on a daily basis who request services as young adults. Unfortunately, waiting lists exist for most services and the young adult waits for their name to move to the top of the list.

Traditionally, the Division of Mental Retardation has been involved with adolescents only in crises situations when the parent and/or schools are experiencing difficulty meeting the needs of the individual. As with the adults, the teenager must also often wait for the desired service to become available. In both situations there sometimes are no other resources available and the individual ends up sitting at home each day, just passing the time. Loss of skills, social isolation, depression and stress on the family system are frequent outcomes in these situations.

In recognition of the desire to develop a proactive approach to these issues, the Alabama Developmental Disabilities Planning Council awarded a grant to Community Service Programs in West Alabama, Inc. to develop a person-center/family-centered transition model in the Tuscaloosa, Alabama, area. The project, called *Futures Unlimited*, is coordinated through Region II Community Services and relies on the following as key components:

1. Interagency collaboration
2. Personal Futures Planning
3. Instruction in self-advocacy and self-determination
4. Facilitating paid work experiences
5. Service coordination
6. Use of natural supports whenever possible
7. Parent training/instruction, and
8. Development of a Junior People First group

Introduction to Personal Futures Planning

We are here today to tell you what *Futures Unlimited* is accomplishing and what the parents and students are telling us about our efforts. First, we need to explain what Personal Futures Planning is and is not. It is a whole life or holistic life planning process. This approach was developed by Beth Mount (1987) and builds upon the lifestyle planning work of John O'Brien (1987).

This is a consumer/ student-driven process in which the student and his or her family explore their feeling and desires about the type of life they each want for the student when he or she graduates from school.

This is a consumer-or student-driven process in which the student and his or her family explore their feeling and desires about the type of life they each want for the student when he or she graduates from school. Through a series of meetings with a Service Coordinator or facilitator, the student and family members examine the possibilities which may be pursued in all life areas. Eventually, the individual and family members are able to express their personal vision of the future of the student. The personal futures statement serves as the guiding statement of desires which drives the development and implementation of an individual's Futures Plan. The Futures Plan is a written representation of the student's dreams and action plan of how to reach the dreams.

A Personal Futures Plan is not an IEP. They differ in several important ways. First of all, a Futures Plan builds upon the individual's abilities and likes. Although an individual's limitations are not ignored, the focus is not on remediation of skill deficits but is instead on what the student can do and likes to do. A second important difference lies in the fact that IEP's target skill acquisition and maintenance by the student. The Futures Plan targets the development, attainment, and coordination of services, resources, and supports necessary for the student to accomplish his life plans. A final important difference is that a Futures Plan is developed with the student's (and family's) wishes and dreams as the driving force behind it, not what agencies can deliver or professionals think is "best" for the student.

Where is Futures Unlimited Located?

Futures Unlimited works with school-aged individuals in Tuscaloosa County. We randomly selected 20 students from the local school systems between the ages of 16-20 years old with IQs between 25-60. Ten students were selected from each of the two school systems in the Tuscaloosa area. As a result of our selection criteria and the way the schools are configured in our community, the majority of project students attend two segregated Special Education schools. However, there are participants from most of the local high schools also. Seventeen students and their families have completed the futures development process thus far.

Overall, the student characteristics were not unusual. (see Table 1 for specifics).

Table 1

		Percent
Male	(N = 7)	41
Female	(N = 10)	58
Race		
White	(N = 8)	47
Afro-Amer	(N = 9)	53
IQ Level		
Mild	(N = 6)	35
Moderate	(N = 7)	41
Severe	(N = 2)	12
Profound	(N = 2)	12

When asked who the student and family turns to for help when needed, the responses revealed the majority relay on each other and family. Only four students received assistance from any formal service delivery agencies. (see Table 2).

Table 2

Sources of Support		Percent
Family		
None	(N = 2)	12
One	(N = 3)	18
Two	(N = 6)	35
Three	(N = 2)	12
Four +	(N = 4)	24
Agency Support Sources		
None	(N = 13)	77
One	(N = 3)	18
Two	(N = 1)	6

What Do Parents and Students Say about Futures Planning?

- **A Parent's Perspective**

My name is Patricia Crowder. I have a daughter who has been receiving Futures Unlimited services. My daughter, Michelle, is profoundly retarded and requires that someone be with her at all times. Futures Unlimited has helped me face what Michelle's and my family's lives will be now that Michelle has graduated from school. Quite honestly, I have been afraid to think about how things would be without the assistance of the school system in taking care of Michelle on a daily basis.

> ***. . . we were able to develop a life plan for Michelle which addresses all the major life areas. We have been able to develop a personalized service plan for Michelle . . . I want Michelle's week to have the same flow or rhythm of life as yours or mine.***

The Futures staff have helped me in several different ways. To start with, I didn't know what I wanted for Michelle. After several meetings with the Futures staff, I was able to start putting into words the kind of life both my husband and I hoped Michelle would have. From that, we were able to develop a life plan for Michelle which addresses all the major life areas. We have been able to develop a personalized service plan for Michelle. Michelle will be attending a day program part-time; she will continue swimming on a regular basis (an activity she is good at and enjoys); and she will be going out in the community to the movies, lunch, or other activities on a regular basis throughout the week with a companion. I want Michelle's week to have the same flow or rhythm of life as yours or mine. I am much more confident now that everything will be alright for Michelle than I have ever been before.

- **A Young Adult's Perspective**

My name is Elouise Woods. I am working with Futures Unlimited to help start a Junior People First group for teenagers. I thought something was out there waiting for me when I graduated from high school but I was wrong. I went to all the workshops in town, getting ready to go to work after I graduated. It took me 10 years before I got a real job. Ten years before, I could convince anyone that I could do a real job.

Birmingham's Student Transitional Education Program (S.T.E.P.)

Nan Butler, Brant Bice, Marzett Harris, and Karlyn Johnson

With the passing of the first Carl Perkins Act, Birmingham Public Schools have been dedicated to providing transitional services for special needs vocational students. In 1986, the school system entered into a contract with the Easter Seals Occupational Rehabilitation Center (ES-ORC) to provide these services. For twenty-five years, this facility has provided similar services to handicapped adults. It was logical to put ES-ORC's expertise to work in developing a transition program for the Birmingham City Schools.

The Student Transitional Education Program coordinates many classes and job placements with the Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Services counselor assigned to each school.

This program consists of a vocational assessment, done in the eighth grade, and the **Student Transitional Education Program (STEP)** for high school students. One of the unique points of this program is that the staff travels to each school to deliver these services to the students, rather than having the student come to the program. This enables students to devote maximum time to learning, not traveling.

Vocational Assessment

For approximately ten years, the Birmingham City Schools have administered vocational testing to special populations students. In prior years, the testing was administered to ninth grade students. This testing determines proper placement of the students as mandated by the Carl Perkins Act. The Carl Perkins Act states that vocational information be made available to special needs students and their parents, at least one year before the student enters the grade level in which vocational education programs are offered. Students should enter the beginning of the ninth grade.

In the Birmingham School System, students receive testing in the eighth grade by the SAGE assessment. The SAGE (System for Assessment and Group Evaluation) matches aptitudes, educational levels, job and training to provide a general vocational profile. Currently, the Birmingham School System uses the Vocational Aptitude Battery (VAB) component of the SAGE. The VAB consists of the following aptitudes: verbal, numerical, general, spatial, forms perception, finger dexterity, manual dexterity, motor coordination, eye-hand-foot coordination, color discrimination, and clerical.

The Birmingham School System contracts ES-ORC to administer the SAGE assessment program. ORC provides the system with a thorough report and recommendations for each child tested. This report further provides special education and vocational teachers pertinent information about the abilities and vocational interests of their students.

SAGE becomes a part of the special education student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP) and is an aid during the IEP Conference in planning an appropriate vocational tract for the students. Further, the assessment is a tool for vocational teachers to define the objectives for their students in addition to the strategies for accomplishing those objectives. The STEP program and the contracting of ES-ORC, a United Way agency, receive funds through the Carl Perkins Act.

Student Transitional Education Program

The Student Transitional Education Program consists of several components designed to aid special needs students in the transition from school to productive adults.

Job Readiness Classes

Seniors or students in their last year of school are offered Job Readiness classes. Classes are held separately for Educable Mentally-Retarded, Learning Disabled, Emotional Conflict, and selected Trainable Mentally-Retarded and Other Health-Impaired students. Physically-handicapped students receive services in smaller groups or one-on-one. Necessary accommodations to the student's schedule are made in order to serve all eligible. During the classes, a wide variety of topics are covered that include the usual Job Readiness curriculum. In addition to the regular classroom curriculum, job interview skills are covered and practiced. Near the end of the classes, interviews are videotaped and reviewed by the class. This helps each student actually see what they are doing right or wrong. When possible, local officials or personalities are invited to interview the students.

In addition to the regular classroom curriculum, the following are also covered with most students:

All students are placed in a nonprofit setting and minimum wage is paid by Student Transitional Education Program. Students are referred by their special education teacher, vocational teacher, school counselor, Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Services counselor, or Rehabilitation Specialist.

Tours:Students tour local factories, talk to employers, and learn about careers available in their community. They also go to the bank, AVRS, ORC, and the State Employment office.

SOICC:The Alabama State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (SOICC) is used to give students information about jobs they have indicated an interest in. This program allows them to see what would be required to be employed in these fields.

Certificate:Students who successfully complete the Job Readiness classes receive a certificate of completion.

AIDS, DRUGS, GANGS: These issues are, unfortunately, some that must be addressed. In some schools, the problem is more serious than others. The STEP staff must depend on information from school personnel in identifying problem areas. Special needs students are often overlooked when these topics are discussed in the school setting. These students are affected just as much by these issues as the other students, sometimes even more. Gangs find that Special Education students can easily be "used" as drug runners, etc., and we must help them realize the dangers involved.

Dropout Intervention: When called upon by teachers, the STEP staff also works with students who are considering quitting school. Sometimes the promise of a job through the Work Experience is enough to save them. Often the problems stem from personal problems at home and school. These are dealt with in whatever manner is most appropriate for the student.

Work Experience

The Work Experience provides students with a chance to work part-time during their senior or last year in high school. All students are placed in a nonprofit setting and minimum wage is paid by Student Transitional Education Program. Students are referred by their special education teacher, vocational teacher, school counselor, Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Services counselor, or Rehabilitation Specialist.

Many students are able to participate in co-op classes because of Student Transitional Education Program. Students with special needs are often very difficult placements for the cooperative education teacher. By referring them to Student Transitional Education Program for placement, the teacher may be more willing to work with these students. Many things must be considered in making a placement in the work experience. The student's schedule and transportation are especially his or her areas of interest factors. Students in co-op classes should be working in an area related to the class.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Connection

The Student Transitional Education Program coordinates many classes and job placements with the Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Services counselor assigned to each school. The Student Transitional Education Program staff helps the counselor identify eligible students and encourage them to follow through the activation process for Vocational Rehabilitation services. Once they are active Vocational Rehabilitation clients, the counselor

can assist the study in a variety of ways. Also, students may need uniforms or a bus pass (to use public transportation) for their Work Experience. When the students graduate from high school, the VR counselor has a plan ready to continue working with them. This may include participation in a facility program, technical school, college or, if they are ready, job placement.

Conclusion

The Student Transitional Education Program is an example of many different people working together to reach the transitional goals of special needs students. With Vocational Education, Special Education, Easter Seals Occupational Rehabilitation Center, Student Transitional Education Program, and Adult Vocational Rehabilitation Services coordinating their services, the result is always in the best interest of the student.

The University of Alabama's Project BOLD: Services for Students with Learning Disabilities

Pat Friend

Consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, it is the policy of the University of Alabama that no qualified person shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted or sponsored by the university. Included in this policy are provisions for affording students with learning disabilities an equal opportunity to develop and demonstrate their academic skills.

It is the policy of the University of Alabama that no qualified person shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted or sponsored by the university.

Services and procedures for University of Alabama students with learning disabilities are administered through the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). Within the CTL, Project BOLD–Bridge Over Learning Differences–seeks to ensure equal access while maintaining the academic integrity of the instruction. BOLD Plus is an amplified version of Project BOLD and is offered as an option for students who desire close monitoring and extra services. While Project BOLD is offered at no cost to the student, BOLD Plus necessitates an additional fee. All services for students with learning disabilities focus upon (a) developing strategies and accommodations for meeting university demands, and (b) cultivating independence, responsibility, and self-advocacy.

University Policy and Procedures

Admission to The University of Alabama

All applications for freshman and transfer admission to the university are handled through the Office of Admission Services. General admission standards, as delineated in the current University of Alabama Catalog and administered by Admission Services, must be met by students with learning disabilities. Admission to the university requires acceptable evidence of previous academic performance and scores on a recognized admission test. Scores from nonstandard administration (oral or untimed) of the ACT/SAT are accepted.

Similarly, the **University Core Curriculum** is required of all graduates and provides the foundation of every undergraduate degree program at The University of Alabama. Therefore, every student must adhere to the **University Core Curriculum**.

Registration for LD Services

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY: To centralize and standardize university procedures for LD services, the Center for Teaching and Learning is exclusively responsible for handling LD documentation, for authorizing requests for academic accommodations (subject to an appeals process described below), and for maintaining accommodation records. With the exception of information needed in an appeals process, documentation should not be requested or held by faculty.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY: It is the responsibility of the student to make an official request for accommodations through contact with the Center for Teaching and Learning, Associate Director for Project BOLD/BOLD Plus, Room 106, Osband Hall. Due to privacy issues, documentation filed with other university offices (e.g., Disabled Student Services, Student Support Services) is transferable only if authorization is provided by the student. Therefore, the student must initiate a direct registration for LD services through the CTL.

DOCUMENTATION: In order to receive accommodations and services, the student must provide a current (within the last three years) neuropsychological or psychoeducational evaluation that specifically states the presence of a learning disability. This evaluation must be done by a licensed psychologist or by university-certified professionals. The report must include a summary of areas of testing, actual test scores, an overall summary and diagnosis, recommendations, and suggested strategies for student, professors and academic advisors.

As a foundation for appropriate modifications and services, the assessment battery must be comprehensive and include the following elements:

1. Individually-administered intelligence test
2. Individually-administered achievement tests in the following areas:
    a. Written Language (spelling and written expression)
    b. Reading (decoding and comprehension)
    c. Mathematics (applied and calculations)
3. Based on results of intelligence and achievement tests, appropriate cognitive processing evaluations in areas such as:
    a. Language--general, receptive, expressive (written/oral)
    b. Visual-spatial
    c. Memory
    d. Executive functioning
4. Social-emotional assessment via interview and instrumentation judged appropriate.
5. Other as determined by psychologist.

Determination regarding the acceptability of LD documentation is the responsibility of the Project BOLD/BOLD Plus Associate Director, with assistance from the LD Advisory Board. The University of Alabama has two major purposes in assessments requirements: (a) to provide students with learning disabilities appropriate modifications and services in order to enhance their potential for college success; (b) to uphold the academic integrity of The University of Alabama by assuring that no student is given unfair advantage because of a suspected or documented learning disability. Toward these ends, the university reserves the right to require the specific diagnostic information necessary to determine the nature and extent of individual learning disabilities. Assessment costs are the responsibility of the student.

Accommodations Procedures

ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS: Based upon adequate documentation and upon consultation with the student, the Associate Director for Project BOLD is responsible for recommending appropriate, reasonable academic accommodations. The Associate Director issues a formal accommodation request to be presented to the appropriate instructor by the student. The instructor indicates agreement to the accommodation(s) by signing and returning the request form to the Associate Director for Project BOLD. A copy of the accommodation request is sent by the Associate Director to the department head, program director, or other administrator responsible for the course or requirement in question.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION: The course instructor/ academic unit is responsible for implementing academic accommodations to the fullest possible extent. The Associate Director for Project BOLD should be contacted by the instructor if assistance in implementation is needed.

APPEALS PROCESS: Questions and concerns regarding accommodations should be directed to the Associate Director for Project BOLD by the instructor. If concerns are not resolved through discussion and if the instructor objects to the accommodation(s), the objection should be registered with the department head, program director, or other administrator responsible for the course. If this academic representative concurs that a request presents an "undue hardship" or compromises the academic integrity of the course or program, the specific objections should be registered in writing with the Associate Director for Project BOLD. Within twenty-four hours, the Associate Director will initiate the appeals process by convening the Learning Disabilities Advisory Board. Within five working days, the Board will issue an option concerning the accommodation and forward the opinion to the Academic Vice-President. Final determination will be made by the Academic Vice-President. Copies of the decision will be forwarded by the Office of Academic Affairs to the instructor, department head or program director, and to the Associate Director for Project BOLD. The Associate Director will then notify the student.

If the student seeks redress, he/she may appeal through the academic grievance process or contact the University Compliance Officer for information regarding options for filing a discrimination complaint.

Services

The staff of Project BOLD works with students in determining (from documentation) and arranging reasonable, personally-appropriate accommodations. These may include:

1. **MODIFIED TESTING CONDITIONS**: These may include extended time, isolated testing situation, taped or oral tests, optional test formats (multiple choice, short answer, or essay), readers, or scribes.

2. **READER/TAPING SERVICES**: Students can secure taped texts, mainly through Recording for the Blind. The Arkenstone reader can also be utilized for this accommodation.

3. **NOTE-TAKING ASSISTANCE**: Special paper and volunteer note-takers are available to students for whom this service is deemed necessary.

4. **ACCESS TO ACADEMIC AIDS**: Students may utilize tape recorders for lectures; calculators and/or dictionaries in the classroom and in test situations; word processors, spell checks, grammar checkers, and thesaurus for written work; study cards for essay tests or mathematics tests involving application of lengthy formulas.

5. **PRIORITY REGISTRATION**: Students with special learning needs require balanced schedules and extra time to procure taped books; therefore, they are given the earliest registration times possible.

6. **WRITING AND SPELLING ACCOMMODATION**: Arrangements can be made with instructors for a waiver of punctuation, grammar, and spelling on in-class assignments.

7. **ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENTS**: Arrangements can be made with instructors for the submission of alternative assignments to meet course requirements, such as assignments submitted via cassette tape.

8. **TECHNOLOGY LAB**: Learning enhancement aids, including an Arkenstone reader (text to voice capability), VocalEyes (text to voice capability), DragonDictate (voice to text capability), computers with word-processing capability, audiocassette players, Franklin Spellers, NCR paper, and talking calculators are available for students with learning disabilities.

9. **TUTORS**: The Project utilizes tutors from the Center for Teaching and Learning. These tutors are available for help in a variety of math classes, science classes, computer science, accounting, economics, statistics, and foreign languages.

10. **PEER SUPPORT GROUP**: The peer support group meets periodically to participate in seminars and to provide mutual support and awareness of issues related to learning-disabled students.

11. **COUNSELING**: Counseling is available through the Psychology Clinic, Counseling and Psychological services (CAPS), and the learning disability specialists.

12. **STUDENT ADVOCACY**: Project BOLD serves as an advocate for the student in cases where self-advocacy has not been sufficient.

13. **LIAISON**: The Project BOLD office assists in the coordination of services between Disabled Student Services, Student Support Services, career counselors, and other service-delivery agencies.

14. **CAREER PROJECT**: The University of Alabama conducts a Career Development Project for students with learning disabilities to provide specialized services to facilitate the transition from postsecondary education to professional employment. Personal career counseling and planning, job search instruction, and job placement assistance are offered. Additionally, the LD Career Project offers career exploration courses which include instruction in communication skills, interview skills, problem management counseling, résumé-writing assistance, self-advocacy, accessing of community resources, employment rights, and self-presentation skills.

The University of Alabama conducts a Career Development Project for students with learning disabilities to provide specialized services to facilitate the transition from postsecondary education to professional employment. Personal career counseling and planning, job search instruction, and job placement assistance are offered.

15. **BOLD PLUS** offers the above listed services as well as specialized tutoring and instruction by learning disabilities professionals, intense training seminars on learning strategies and self-advocacy, and close tracking of the student's progress. There is a fee of $1,000 per semester for all participants in BOLD Plus.

UAB's Program for Students with Learning Disabilities[1]

Betty N. West and Carolyn Toler

The Horizons Program is a college-based, nondegree program for students with specific learning disabilities and other mild learning problems. Housed in the School of Education, this two-year program offers young adults an opportunity to make and keep new friends, learn important life skills, and prepare for a career. The program provides a safe and nurturing environment that supports each student's goal of becoming a vital and contributing member of the community.

Our program is only the fifth of its kind in the United States to offer a nondegree curriculum on a college campus for this population.

The admission criteria for the Horizons Program includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Young adults 18-26.
2. Documented specific learning disability and/or other mild learning disability.
3. Functional literacy.
4. High school diploma, GED, or certification of completion/attendance.
5. Evidence of psychological maturity and stability, and no evidence of conditions that could interfere with successful program completion.
6. Capacity for supervised residential living.
7. Capacity for work-related activities.
8. Student interest in work/independent living programs.
9. Parent/guardian support.
10. Evidence of student management of medication and other health-related issues.

Our program is only the fifth of its kind in the United States to offer a nondegree curriculum on a college campus for this population. The first class entered UAB in the Fall of 1992, and was comprised of students from nine states and one foreign country. The Horizon students live in one of the residential campus dormitories, a setting that allows them to experience campus life while pursuing their custom-designed education.

The students are eligible for student life activities and are encouraged to attend varied and stimulating campus events (social and cultural) and take additional continuing education electives offered through UAB Special Studies while enrolled. Also, this setting is unique in the fact that it is the only program housed within a university with the diversity of a full traditional university, a medical school, a dental school, and a major regional medical complex

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[1] For more information, contact: UAB Horizons Program, 157 Education Building, 901 South 13th Street, Birmingham, Alabama 35294-1250, 1-800-822-6242

in the same physical site and operating under the same administrative leadership. UAB is the largest employer in the State of Alabama and occupies sixty square blocks of downtown Birmingham. Students may access the resources of UAB and the metropolitan Birmingham area.

Horizons Program students participate in a core curriculum that is supported by personalization within courses and career counseling. The courses are designed around the following curricular focus.

INDEPENDENT LIVING:

Life Skills and Life Skills lab teach and reinforce independent living skills critical for young adults. Topics include banking, money management, travel and leisure activities, wardrobe maintenance, apartment living, and consumer product selection.

Health courses focus on activities designed to promote independence in health management and awareness of current issues in health care. Included are individualized exercise plans with volunteer peer partners from the university at large.

Human Sexuality focuses on issues of health and responsible decision-making. It covers the psychological, emotional, moral, social, and legal aspects of sexuality.

SOCIAL INDEPENDENCE

Social Skills courses focus on the subtleties of both personal and professional social interaction. Role play and discussion of social interactions are used to increase skills and confidence. Specific course titles include Stress Management, Conflict Management, and Interpersonal Relations.

Current Events uses television, newspapers, magazines, and other available sources of information as the basis for student awareness and the basis for student discussion.

CAREER PREPARATION

Psychology of Learning looks at issues of personal learning styles and preferred modes, individual capacities and abilities, and accommodations, strategies and compensations necessary for success. This is the companion course for Orientation to Careers and establishes the basis for an individual career plan.

Psychology of Achievement extends the concept of self-awareness and acceptance to promote and enhance self-esteem training. Concepts focus on emotional and physical fitness and well-being, while balancing goals directed toward careers, interpersonal relationships, and personal health.

Career courses begin with a focus on individual values clarification and an analysis of strengths and weakness. The students take this information and research potential career opportunities through interviews, reading, seminars, guest speakers, and job-shadowing. Students link into the services of the UAB Career Center to broaden their self-assessment and research base opportunities. Other opportunities for university-at-large participation include the university Fall and Spring Job Fairs, résumé services, career counseling and career seminar series. When students have selected their focus career area, on-the-job training sites with job coaches are made available at UAB and the Birmingham metropolitan area. In 1992-93, thirty-eight different work sites were utilized for job-shadowing.

The University of Alabama's LD "Bridges to Career Success" Project:

Jamie Satcher and Marcheta McGhee

While many colleges and universities provide a range of services and accommodations which promote the academic success of students with disabilities, those services which prepare the student for accurate career-planning and placement may often be overlooked. This paper describes **Bridges to Career Success: The LD Career Project**, a federally-funded program at the University of Alabama which is designed to enhance the career-planning and placement skills of college students with learning disabilities.

Most colleges and universities are willing to alter admissions policies for qualified applicants with learning disabilities so that these applicants will have equal opportunity to participate in college. Furthermore, many colleges and universities have developed special programs for these students.

According to Siperstein (1988), colleges and universities serving students with learning disabilities should view the services provided from a three-stage model: (a) entry into college, (b) academic and social adjustment while in college, and (c) exit from college. Most colleges and universities are willing to alter admissions policies for qualified applicants with learning disabilities so that these applicants will have equal opportunity to participate in college. Furthermore, many colleges and universities have developed special programs for these students which provide academic and social support through (a) peer support groups, (b) individualized academic planning, and (c) the identification and provision of classroom and test accommodations, such as extended time to complete tests, notetakers, readers, etc. (Brinckerhoff, Shaw, & McGuire, 1992; Michael, 1987; Siperstein, 1988; Vogel, 1982; Vogel, 1985).

Although a great deal of attention may be given to helping persons with learning disabilities enter college and to providing support once they are enrolled, it seems that few programs emphasize career-planning and placement. This presentation describes a career-planning and placement model for students with learning disabilities at the University of Alabama.

Bridges to Career Success

Bridges to Career Success: The LD Career Project is a three-year, federally-funded program to develop a career-planning and placement model for students with learning

disabilities. Bridges to Career Success recognizes that career-planning and placement for students with learning disabilities encompasses activities that are useful for all students, as well as those which are specific to students with learning disabilities. Direct services which are available for students include:

- **Career Exploration Course**: A three-hour course sponsored cooperatively by the project and the university's Career Center which focuses on informational and experiential activities regarding values, self-assessment, sources of career information, and disability legislation.

- **Individualized Career Counseling**: Assesses job acquisition skills areas including résumé development, communication skills, and job-seeking and interviewing skills. Provides individualized career exploration.

- **Interest assessment**: Uses structured interviews to work with students to identify career interests which "match" the student's strengths.

Bridges to Career Success is also designed to promote awareness of the career-planning and placement needs of these students through the training of rehabilitation counselors, school counselors, career counselors, college faculty, and parents.

- **Job Shadowing**: Provides opportunities for students to observe/shadow persons performing jobs in their career interest area(s).

- **Job-Seeking Skills Training**: Provides assistance with developing sources of job information, accessing the "hidden" labor market, résumé development, cover letters, etc.

- **Job Interview Skills Training**: Provides assistance with effective communication skills in the interview, dressing appropriately, etc. Videotaped role plays and tape-scripts of interviews with counselor feedback are available. Mock interviews with employers in the community can be arranged upon request.

- **Identification of Accommodations**: Involves identifying the essential functions of jobs within the student's career interest area and determining work accommodations which would be needed for equal employment opportunity.

- **Self-advocacy**: Provides assistance in helping the students to describe their accommodation needs to potential employers. Emphasis on rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Bridges to Career Success is also designed to promote awareness of the career-planning and placement needs of these students through the training of rehabilitation counselors, school counselors, career counselors, college faculty, and parents. These workshops are scheduled periodically throughout the year. Project staff are also available to provide training, conduct presentations, or meet with other interested persons upon request.

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Real-Time Captioning in an Educational Setting
A Pilot Project at Auburn University

Kelly Haynes

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 mandates effective communication as a component of providing equal access for persons with disabilities. The implications for educational institutions serving persons who are deaf or hearing impaired is significant since data from the Heath Resource Center in Washington, D.C. revealed that 10.5% of full-time college freshmen report having a hearing problem (1991). Of this group, approximately 1-2% would be expected to be totally deaf or severely hearing impaired. Because of the communication difficulties encountered in a hearing world, these individuals have traditionally been limited educationally. This is easy to understand when one considers the fact that hearing adults by the age of 20 have usually mastered one or even two languages in terms of speaking, reading and writing. The deaf individual must attempt to learn sign language which is not in general use, as well as the written language of English to gain educational access (Nelson, Prinz, & Dalke, 1991).

Real-time captioning is transcription at the rapid rate of 200+ words per minute by a court reporter using a steno-machine. . . . . Taking technology a step further, Auburn's Telecommunications Division built and modified equipment at both sites, and real-time captioning long-distance was born!

In a university setting, students who are hearing impaired usually wear hearing aids. However, in many lecture situations the student needs a more direct link to the professor's voice via an FM system. For students who are deaf, the charge to ensure that the lecture and other auditory information is accessible and usable is a heavy responsibility.

Deaf individuals typically use sign language as their main mode of communication, both for giving and receiving information. A sign language interpreter is commonly employed for a student taking classes, and this is certainly the very least that should be done to accommodate the deaf student. However, the interpreter must be highly skilled to capture the essence of more complex classes and curricula. The deaf student must focus on both the interpreter and the professor in order to get the translation, as well as the professor's affect and gestures, and additional visual information on the board, overheads, films, handouts, etc. There is no way for the deaf student to take notes, so in many cases, the notes of fellow students, or a specified notetaker must be relied upon. In reality, college classes become a very demanding situation for a deaf student, much more so than for the hearing student.

In an effort to find a way to relieve some of the stress in the classroom environment, the technology of real-time captioning was explored. Real-time captioning is transcription at the rapid rate of 200+ words per minute by a court reporter using a steno-machine. Software translates the input to WordPerfect, enabling a person to read the lecture content on the screen immediately. Ideally, the stenographer would be sitting in the classroom, however, in more rural areas like Auburn, Alabama, it may be as difficult to engage a stenographer as it is to find an interpreter. Auburn University began to work with the Prince Institute of Court Reporting in Montgomery, sixty miles away. Taking technology a step further, Auburn's Telecommunications Division built and modified equipment at both sites, and real-time captioning long-distance was born!

As the use of real-time captioning technology increases, it will enable more deaf and severely hearing impaired individuals to reach their full potential in college, and go on to fulfilling careers. Hopefully, this technology will also be seen soon in secondary and elementary school settings so that deaf and hearing impaired students can be even better prepared to go on to post-secondary environments.

For three quarters a deaf student attended class with an interpreter, but was also able to see the lecture content (as it was transcribed by a stenographer in the Prince Institute) on a lap top computer screen immediately. The deaf student was also able to use the keyboard to type questions which could then be read by a peer. The professor's answer was entered into the transcript as well. After class the student was able to print out a transcript of the lecture, which averaged twenty single-spaced pages for a one hour lecture class. The end result was a more fully prepared student, one who for the first time had the opportunity to see every word!

Several variables must be considered prior to considering the use of real-time captioning for a deaf student. First, the student must have strong reading comprehension and written language skills to be able to benefit from the lengthy transcript. The student must be willing to try a new method of accessing the information.

Secondly, the stenographer must be willing to prepare a new dictionary with the vocabulary for the class to be transcribed. If this is not done, the transcript will be filled with "conflicts", or words which have been entered phonetically, but are not easily read. The stenographer must be interested in working with the deaf student on a regular schedule, and willing to learn a new software package.

Finally, the institution must assume the lead role as service provider. The office responsible for serving students with disabilities should determine which students would benefit most from the real-time captioning service, and for which classes. It has been our experience that students who are deaf are at the greatest disadvantage in the university environment, however, captioning requires a high level of competence in reading comprehension. Severely hearing impaired students who cannot benefit from an FM system in class may be next in line. Classes such as high level mathematics, chemistry, physics, or labs may be difficult, if not impossible to transcribe in an accurate manner.

The professor who is teaching the class, and the students, should be prepared for the intrusion of equipment and personnel by explaining the benefits of the service and demonstrating the increased access to the course content. The institution must also be willing to incur the costs associated with real-time captioning services. This may include the purchase of real-time software, a lap top computer, and stenographer time. Using real-time captioning long-distance resulted in the added costs of wiring and phone calls.

As the use of real-time captioning technology increases, it will enable more deaf and severely hearing impaired individuals to reach their full potential in college, and go on to fulfilling careers. Hopefully, this technology will also be seen soon in secondary and elementary school settings so that deaf and hearing impaired students can be even better prepared to go on to post-secondary environments. The early emphasis on language is critical to later academic success. Research has shown that deaf children can begin to acquire reading and writing skills in English during their preschool years through proper instructional techniques (Nelson, Prinz, Prinz, & Dalke, 1991).

References

Henderson, C. (1992). College freshmen with disabilities: A statistical profile. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education.

Nelson, K.E., Prinz, P.M., & Dalke, D. (1989). Transitions from sign language to text via an interactive microcomputer system. In J. Kyle & B. Woll (Eds.), Deaf children's development(pp.77-94). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nelson, K.E., Prinz, P.M., Prinz. E.A., & Dalke, D. (1991). Processes for text and language acquisition in the context of microcomputer-videodisc instruction for deaf and multihandicapped deaf children. In D. S. Martin (Ed.), Advances in cognition, education, and deafness(pp.162-169). Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press.

Auburn University's Introductory Transition Course

Clarence Brown

The purpose of this paper is to acquaint the reader with the Transition Course we now offer at Auburn through the Department of Rehabilitation and Special Education. Included in this syllabus are (a) the course objectives, (b) the required readings, (c) the class schedule and assignments, and (d) the course requirements. First, however, it is important to note the philosophy of our department. In essence, the nature of the course reflects these premises:

- We believe in the full rights, privileges, opportunities, and accommodations for all people with disabilities. May they be assimilated into the mainstream of American life.

- We believe in the importance of special education and rehabilitation professionals to assist people with disabilities in achieving their personal, educational, social and economic goals. May we recruit, prepare, and graduate qualified individuals who are committed and competent in helping them attain their goals.

- We believe that a theoretical, empirical, and best-practices knowledge-base is essential. May we be current in our teachings of this knowledge and active in our contributions toward its advancement.

- We believe in the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in our teachings and practices to assist people with disabilities enhance their quality of life. May our attitudes and actions support this end.

- We believe that all qualified persons, regardless of race, religion, creed, gender, or handicap should join in the mission to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. May we embrace cultural diversity in our academic and service delivery programs.

For now, simply consider the interdisciplinary premise. With recent mandates for service agencies to work cooperatively in the provision of services to students with disabilities, it is evident that preservice, post-secondary training programs constitute a logical starting p[illegible]t. Over the past several years subtle changes have taken place which have begun to "blur the line" historically separating special education and rehabilitation curricula. For example, our Rehabilitation and Special Education students are now finding themselves enrolled in common courses. **Introduction to Rehabilitation and Special Education** is required for students within our Department, and represents our initial effort to allign the two disciplines more closely. Also, from a rehabilitation perspective, we have begun to include more transition-related content. Starting with our **Introduction to Evaluation** course we now address the role of the vocational rehabilitation counselor and the vocational evaluator in the school system. This course, **Transition from School to Work**, reflects this cross-disciplinary direction in which we are now headed.

In summary, this course has been designed to reflect federal legislative mandates and State Department of Education initiatives as they relate to the needs of secondary students in transtion from school to community living/adjustment. Rehabilitation and special education students are brought together through this course in which they learn, in detail, about each discipline and how to establish cooperative working relationships. Students become familiar with the language of each respective professional discipline, the types of services provided, personnel qualifications, Individualized Education Plans and Individualized Transition Plans, rural transition, issues surrounding functional assessment and curriculum, and independent living.

Course Objectives

1. To provide students with a historical, philosophical, legislative, and programmatic understanding of transition from school to work and community.

2. To provide students with the fundamental knowledge for applying various models of transition.

3. To provide students with the fundamental knowledge of "traditional" and "functional" assessment and curricula and an understanding of the differences between the two approaches

4. To provide students with a knowledge base of transition planning and programming

5. To provide students with an awareness of the interdisciplinary nature of transition and the importance of employing the local team and collaborative approach.

Required Readings

Much reading on transition is required for this course. These readings include (a) the major text, (b) the proceedings for Alabama's two statewide conferences, and (c) a list of supplemental readings. Below is the main text with a partial Table of Content outline following:

Gajar, A, Goodman, L., & McAfee, J. (1993). Secondary schools and beyond: Transition of individuals with mild disabilities, Merrill/McMillian Press, New York.

In addition to the above text, the students also are required to read the proceedings of the first two statewide Alabama Conferences on Transition.

- Browning, P. (Ed.), (1992). Transition in Alabama: A profile of committment. Auburn, AL: Department of Rehabilitation and Special Education, Training and Development Program (proceedings of the 1st Statewide Conference).

Section One, **The National Scene**, includes the keynote addresses delivered by two national leaders in transition, Drs. Halpern and Brolin. Section Two, **A Window to Alabama's Commitment**, includes 11 papers on issues, programs, and services in the state. Section Three, **Transition Resources**, includes 64 annotated references. (30 pictures, 122 pages, $6.00)

- Browning, P. (Ed.), (1993). Transition II in Alabama: A profile of committment. Auburn, AL: Department of Rehabilitation and Special Education, Training and Development Program (proceedings of the 2nd Statewide Conference).

Section One, **The National Scene**, includes the keynote addresses delivered by two national leaders in transition, Drs. Halloran and Szymanski. Section Two, **A Window to Alabama's Commitment**, includes 10 papers on issues, programs, and services in the state. Section Three, **A Window to the Transition Literature**, includes 146 references grouped under (a) a Foundation, (b) Functional Assessment, (c) Functional Curricula, (d) Vocational Preparation, (e) Community Preparation, (f) Self-Determination, and (g) Interagency. (34 pictures, 139 pages, $6.00)

With recent mandates for service agencies to work cooperatively in the provision of services to students with disabilities, it is evident that preservice, post-secondary training programs constitute a logical starting point. Over the past several years subtle changes have taken place which have begun to "blur the line" historically separating special education and rehabilitation curricula. For example, our Rehabilitation and Special Education students are now finding themselves enrolled in common courses. . . Also, from a rehabilitation perspective, we have begun to include more transition-related content.

Presented below is a partial viewing of the Table of Content for the main text. In order to convey the detailed nature of this text, we have presented a more complete account of the content for Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Chapter 1. Rationale and Definitions
- Components and Definitions
- Definitions of Mild Disabilities
- Definitions and Transitional Subcomponents

Chapter 2. History and Legislation
- Historical Background: 1971-1970
- History and Legislation: The 1970s
- Federal Initiative: The 1980s
- Legislation of the 1990s
- Funded Programs and Projects
- Federal Priority

Chapter 3. Models of Transition
- The OSERS Transition Model
- The Halpern Transition Model
- The Vocational Transition Model
- The Brown and Kayser Model
- The Project Interface Model
- Model Comparison
- Lifelong Career Development Model
- The Transition Service Activity Center
- The Experience-based Career Education Model
- Clark's School-based Model
- The Secondary Transition Intervention Effectiveness Institute

Chapter 4. The Process of Transition
Chapter 5. Barriers and Supports
Chapter 6. Issues in Academic Programming and Transition
Chapter 7. Academic Foundations for Transition/Secondary School
Chapter 8. Academic Assessment and Planning for Transition
Chapter 9. Academic Programming
Chapter 10. Academic Programming at the Postsecondary Level
Chapter 11. Philosophical and Empirical Foundations of Vocational Training
Chapter 12. The Technology of Vocational Training
Chapter 13. Models and Programs of Vocational Training
Chapter 14. Work Support Skills
Chapter 15. Independent Living Skills
Chapter 16. Citizenship Skills
Chapter 17. Current and Future Research Priorities
Chapter 18. The Future of Transition

Supplemental Readings

Bostwick, D., & Foss, G. (1981). Obtaining consumer input: Two strategies for identifying and ranking the problems of mentally retarded young adults. Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded, 16, 207-212.

Gaylord-Ross, R. & Browder, D. (1991). Functional assessment: Dynamic and domain properties. Critical Issues in the Lives of People with Severe Disabilities (pp. 45-66). Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Halpern, A. (1985). Transition: A look at the foundations, Exceptional Children, 51, 470-486.

Halpern, A. (1992). Quality of life as a conceptual framework for evaluating transition outcomes. Keynote address for the University of Illinois Transition Research Institute's 7th Annual Project Director's Meeting, Washington, D.C.

Ianacone, R. & Stodden, R. (1991). Transition issues and directions for individuals who are mentally retarded. Overview, 3-7.

Neubert, D., & Leconte, P. (1990). Vocational assessment: Effective intervention for meeting the vocational needs of rural youth with special needs. The Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 12, 17-22.

Renzaglia, A., & Hutchins, M. (1987). Project CO-OP: A model for assessing job requirements, trainee skills, and job-trainee matches for people with moderate to profound handicaps. Diagnostique, 12, 142-155.

Schuler, A., & Perez, L. ( ). Assessment: Current concerns and future directions. Critical Issues in the Lives of People with Severe Disabilities (pp. 101-133). Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Stodden, R., & Boone, R. (1987). Assessing transition services for handicapped youth: A cooperative interagency approach. Exceptional Children, 53, 537-545.

Wehman, P., Kregel, J., & Barcus, J. (1985). From school to work: Vocational transition model for handicapped students. Exceptional Children, 52, 25-37.

White, S. (1990). Developing employment options for special populations in rural America. The Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 12, 29-33.

Will, M. (1990). Bridges from school to work. Programs for the Handicapped: Clearinghouse on the Handicapped. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education, 95-99.

Class Schedule and Assignments (Summer Quarter, 1993)

June 17 **Course Introduction and Overview**

June 21 **A Foundation in Transition**

- **Class Topics: Definitions, History, Legislation**
- **Readings**

Main Text
Chapter 1: Rationale and Definitions
Chapter 2: History and Legislation
Proceedings
I: "Transition in Alabama: A Plan for Further Action" (36-45)
II: "Transition: Life Span and Life Space Considerations for Empowerment" (17-29)
II: "IDEAS and Transition: Questions and Answers" (91-108).

June 28 **A Foundation in Transition (continued)**

- **Class Topics: Transition Models, Transition Process, Transition Barriers**
- **Readings**

Main Text
Chapter 3: Models of Transition and Related areas
Chapter 4: The Process of Transition
Chapter 5: Transition Barriers and Supports

Proceedings
II: "Alabama's Mental Health-Mental Retardation: A Transagency Model for transition" (39-42)

Halpern, A. (1985). Transition: A look at the foundations. Exceptional Children, 51, 470-486.

Will, M. (1990). Bridges from school to work. Programs for the Handicapped: Clearinghouse on the Handicapped. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education, 95-99.

Wehman, P., Kregel, J., & Barcus, J. (1985). From school to work: Vocational transition model for handicapped students. Exceptional Children, 52, 25-37.

Stodden, R., & Boone, R. (1987). Assessing transition services for handicapped youth: A cooperative interagency approach. Exceptional Children, 53, 537-545.

July 5 VACATION - Mom, hot dogs, the lake, and apple pie!!

July 8 **Functional Assessment and Curricula for Transition**

- **Guest Lecturer: Dr. Cari Dunn, Assistant Professor**
  Department of Rehabilitation and Special Education
- **Readings**

Main Text
Chapter 6: Issues in Academic Programming
Chapter 7: Academic Foundations for Transition
Chapter 8: Academic Assessment and Planning

Renzaglia, A., & Hutchins, M. (1987). Project CO-OP: A model for assessing job requirements, trainee skills, and job-trainee matches for people with moderate to profound handicaps. Diagnostique, 12, 142-155.

Schuler, A., & Perez, L. (1991). Assessment: Current concerns and future directions. Critical Issues in the Lives of People with Severe Disabilities (pp. 101-133). Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Gaylord-Ross, R. & Browder, D. (1991). Functional Assessment: Dynamc and domain properties. Critical Issues in the Lives of People with Severe Disabilities (pp. 45-66). Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Neubert, D., & Leconte, P. (1990). Vocational assessment: Effective intervention for meeting the vocational needs of rural youth with special needs. The Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 12, 17-22.

July 12 **Functional Assessment and Curricula for Transition (continued)**

- **Readings**

Main Text
Chapter 9: Academic Programming
Chapter 10: Academic Programming/Postsecondary Level
Proceedings
I: "Alabama's Movement toward a Functional Curricula" (49-52).
II: "Functional Curricula for Transition" (47-53).
II: "Assessment in Transition: A Frame of Reference for Practice" (61-68).

White, S. (1990). Developing employment options for special populations in rural America. The Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 12, 29-33.

July 19 - MID-TERM EXAM

July 26 **Individualized Transition Planning**

- **Class Topics: Transition Planning and Programming, Active Student participation, Parent Involvement, Team Approach**
- **Guest Lecturer: Mr. Mabrey Whetstone, Transition Specialist, Division of Special Education Services, Alabama Department of Education**
- **Readings:**

Main Text
Chapter 11: Philosophical and Empirical Foundations of Vocational Training
Chapter 12: Technology of Vocational Training
Proceedings
I: "A Work Instruction-Experience Program in Dothan (53-58)
I: "A Supported Vocational Training Program in Birmingham" (59-62)
I: "A Vocational Education Program in Jefferson County" (63-64)
II: "Mobile's Work Instruction Program" (31-34)
II: "Marshall County's Transition school" (35-38)

August 2 **Transition and Vocational Considerations**

- **Class Topics: Vocational Assessment, Vocational Training, Community-based work experience, Model programs**
- **Readings:**

Main Text
Chapter 13: Models & Programs of Vocational Training
Chapter 14: Work Support Skills
Proceedings
I: "Resources in Alabama for Job Placement" (pages 77-82)
I: "Social Security Work Incentives for Students in Transition" (43-45)

Wehman, P., Kregel, J., & Barcus, J. (1985). From school to work: Vocational transition model for handicapped students. Exceptional Children, 52, 25-37.

Group Presentations

August 9 **Transition and Independent Living Considerations**

- **Readings**

Main Text
Chapter 15: Independent Living Skills
Chapter 16: Citizenship Skills
Chapter 17: Current and Future Research Priorities

Bostwick, D., & Foss, G. (1981). Obtaining consumer input: Two strategies for identifying and ranking the problems of mentally retarded young adults. Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded, 16, 207-212.

Halpern, A. (1992). Quality of life as a conceptual framework for evaluating transition outcomes. Keynote address for the University of Illinois Transition Research Institute's 7th Annual Project Director's Meeting, Washington, D.C.

Ianacone, R. & Stodden, R. (1985) Transition issues and directions for individuals who are mentally retarded. Overview, 3-7.

August 16 **Transition and the Future and Group Presentations**

- **Readings**

Main Text
Chapter 18: The Future of Transition

August 18 **FINAL EXAM**

Course Requirements and Grading

Requirements

1. Two examinations (multiple choice, short answer, etc.)
   Mid-term exam (Monday July 19th) . . . . . 100 points
   Final exam (Wednesday August 18th) . . . . . 100 points

2. Five abstracts . . . . . 50 points

   One-page typed synopsis of journal article pertinent to the course (transition). Articles must be from appropriate journals written since 1989 and should be attached to your abstract.

3. Group project . . . . . 100 points

   Teams of students will be assigned by the instructor to develop a new and innovative "Transition model". Teams will prepare a 7-10 page paper about their model. The papers must be in APA format and should include references. Each team will then present their model to the class. The paper and the presentation are worth 50 points each.

Teacher Preparation with an Emphasis at the Secondary Level

Philip Browning and Caroline Dunn

The outcome results for our nation's secondary students with disabilities has been less than impressive, to say the least. In addition to the national graduation rate of only 55% (Wagner, 1989), for example, our special education students have only a 35% chance of obtaining full-time employment after leaving school (Rusch, Chadsey-Rusch, & Szymanski, 1992). Wagner (1989), in a national longitudinal study, also found that two years after leaving high school, only 30% of special education students were working full-time and 17% were working part-time. The Alabama graduation record for its students with mild learning handicaps is equivalent to the national graduation rate. For the 1991-1992 school year, only 985 of Alabama's exiting 1,807 students with mental retardation graduated (28% by diploma and 27% by certificate) (Wise, 1992).

Alabama needs to increase its supply of well trained secondary special education teachers. The state's requirement for K-12 certification, however, limits the needed concentration for preparing highly qualified teachers at the secondary level.

The exiting problem we continue to face with these students is immense at both the national and state level. The fact that we have devoted three decades to addressing this transition problem with little improvement demonstrates that there is no simple solution. As such, major efforts for strategic change are now underway (Browning, Brown, & Dunn, 1993). One recent federal approach has been to change the system at the state level, which is the reason for the "systems change" initiative grants awarded to states, for approximately 2.5 million dollars per state for five years (Federal Register, 1992). Another approach to structural change has been from the "bottom up", through the systematic building of local "transition teams" (Halpern, Benz, & Lindstrom, 1992).

Of course, another strategy for attacking the problem is to upgrade personnel competencies through training at both the in-service and pre-service level. In-service training is essential for reaching large numbers of already practicing personnel in a short-time frame for the purpose of addressing immediate need changes. The long range importance of pre-service training, however, is to supply the field with more comprehensively prepared personnel to serve our secondary students with disabilities. It is the purpose of this paper to address pre-service training for secondary special education teachers.

Alabama is committed to improving upon its secondary special education programs that serve over 31,000 students with disabilities. In 1991-1992, for example, the State's Special Education Advisory Panel included as one of its recommendations to the state superintendent: "Special education teacher preparation programs should introduce and/or broaden coursework to insure that educators are familiar with and are able to design student programs based on the student's acquisition of functional competencies that include residential, social, interpersonal and prevocational skills" (p. 13) (Wise, 1992, author's emphasis).

Nevertheless, the state's requirement for a K-12 teacher certification program limits the amount of needed preparation time for the acquisition of critical secondary-related knowledge and competencies. In answer to this problem, a "revised" K-12 master's teacher certification program is introduced that gives emphasis to training secondary teachers. The first section addresses the need for change by presenting the major areas for preparation concentration. Section two proposes a K-12 certification program, which is a revised curricula that emphasizes the preparation of secondary special education teachers. Also presented are the revised program's four innovative training features.

This proposed teacher preparation program is built on four major transition areas: (a) Functional Assessment and Curricula, (b) Vocational and Community Preparation, (c) Self-Determination and Family Involvement, and (d) Interagency Collaboration.

Need for Change

This proposed teacher preparation program is built on four major transition areas: (a) Functional Assessment and Curricula, (b) Vocational and Community Preparation, (c) Self-Determination and Family Involvement, and (d) Interagency Collaboration. The resources used for identifying these targeted areas are presented below, followed by a brief documented justification for them.

Resources

The first resource for determining the importance of these targeted areas was the transition "knowledge-base" that was built since the early 1980s. This literature bank now has over 40 books and 5 special issues in nationally refereed journals. Collectively, this library has provided us with, among other things, (a) a philosophical base for thinking; (b) a conceptual and definitional framework for direction; (c) an awareness of and, in some instances, good understanding of issues and problems that must be resolved; (d) exemplary service models that should be implemented; (e) a knowledge of good instructional and service delivery methods to be applied; and (f) an inventory of functional assessment and curricula materials for practice (Browning, Brown, & Dunn, 1993a). Clearly, one of the important considerations will be for us to take what we already know in the way of philosophy,

programs, services, systems and materials and incorporate it into our existing teacher training programs and practices.

The other resources for documenting need were the data resulting from two recent statewide studies on Alabama's secondary special education programs. In **study #1** (Brown, Browning, & Dunn, 1992), data were provided by special education coordinators and secondary special education teachers representing the city and county schools throughout the state's 12 educational regions. The sample was randomly drawn from Alabama's population of 63 city and 67 county schools and stratified according to the state's 12 educational regions. The results are based on (a) 79% of Alabama's 132 special education coordinators who completed their survey instruments for a 60% return rate, and (b) 302 of 710 special education teacher survey instruments, which yielded a 45% return rate.

In **study #2** (Browning & Brechin, 1993a), the data were provided by the state's rehabilitation counselors assigned to serve secondary students with disabilities (ages 15-25). Fifty-nine of the 76 counselors completed their survey instrument for a return rate of 78%. Also, 47 (82%) of them were assigned to one or more LEAs, for an average of 3.4 LEAs per counselor. The average number of transition clients served by each counselor was 118, totaling 6,372 with a range of 10 to 300 such clients per counselor.

Functional Assessment and Curricula

"Assessment" is an important educational/service delivery ingredient for the planning, programming, and placing of youth with disabilities from school-to-work and community (Browning & Brechin, 1993b). The need for and importance of a functional assessment approach for secondary students in transition has been well documented and is reflected in the literature, such as in (a) books (Halpern & Furher, 1984; Stodden, Ianacone, Boone, & Bisconer, 1987), (b) special issues in national periodicals (Elrod, 1987; Stodden, 1986), (c) individual journal articles (Dick, 1987; Elrod & Sorgenfrei, 1988), (d) assessment tools (Bucher & Brolin, 1987), and (e) instrument reviews (DeStefano, Linn, & Markward, 1987).

"Functional curricula" has been earmarked as one of five federal initiatives for the remainder of the 1990's (Halloran, 1993). This call for "Secondary Curricula Reform" should come as no surprise, especially given some of the recent transition outcome statistics cited earlier. Another reason for curricula change is that there is a current deficiency in secondary curricula on what is taught at that level with too much emphasis placed on remedial academics and not enough placed on functional skills, such as the affective, social, vocational, and daily living domains (Brolin, 1992; Dunn, 1993; Halpern, 1992;). Halpern and Benz (1987) examined secondary special education practices for students with mild disabilities, focusing on curricular implications. They found that 65% of the teachers indicated that a more appropriate curricula was needed in order to improve classroom instruction. Their study was replicated in Alabama (Brown, Browning & Dunn, 1992). Of the 302 teachers who responded to the Alabama survey, 70% indicated a need for more "appropriate" curricula, and the coordinators rated "more appropriate curricula" as one of their top needs. Related assessment and curricula results from the two Alabama studies are reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Alabama's Need for Secondary Preparation Programs with a Transition Emphasis Select Highlights from Studies #1 and #2

- **Functional Assessment and Curricula**

  94% of the teachers reported that (a) "**knowledge of assessment approaches stressing the relationship between student evaluation and instructional intervention**" and (b) "**knowledge of functional skills to be included in the curriculum**" was either "important" or "very important" (study #1)

  93% of the counselors indicated that "**assessment information for developing quality transition plans and services**" was either "important" or "very important" (study #2)

- **Vocational and Community Preparation**

  only 22% of the teachers reported that their students were instructed in community work sites and only 7% said they used community-based instruction. Also, 76 special education coordinators indicated that one of the three most important ways for improving special education programs was "**to establish and/or increase community-based work experiences**" (Study #1)

  only 27% of the counselors reported that their transition clients participated in "community-based work experience programs" (study #2)

- **Student and Parent Involvement**

  over 80% of the counselors indicated that vocational success was either "much related" (46%) or "highly related" (36%) to their clients level of self-determination (study #2)

  95% of the teachers reported that the "**ability to work with families to establish effective teacher/parent partnerships**" was either "important" or very "important" (study #1)

  88% of the counselors reported that the "**ability to get the parents more actively involved in their children's transition plan**" was either "important" or "very important" (study #2)

- **Interagency Coordination**

  77% of the teachers indicated that the "**ability to coordinate programming between school and community settings**" was either "important" or "very important" Also, 76 special education coordinators reported that one of the three most important ways for improving transition programs was "**to establish transition agreements with community agencies**" (study #1)

  94% indicated that the ability to effectively coordinate and use ALL transition-related services and resources in the community was either "important" or "very important"

Vocational and Community Preparation for Transition

The employment of persons with disabilities is a major dilemma facing both Alabama and the nation. Again, Rusch, Chadsey-Rusch, and Szymanski (1992) note that special education students have only a 35% chance of obtaining full-time employment after leaving school. Secondary curricula must have a vocational emphasis (Browning, Dunn, & Brown, 1993)! Its importance has been well-documented, both with (a) vocational functional assessment (Dick, 1987; Leconte & Neubert; 1987; Stodden, Ianacone, Boone, & Bisconer, 1987), and (b) vocational functional curriculum programs (Foss & Vilhauer, 1986; Gajar, Goodman, & McAfee, 1993).

In addition to the students' dismal graduation record and employment status, there is substantial evidence that they often ". . . experience additional difficulties with their community adjustment, including inappropriate living conditions, inadequate financial resources, restricted opportunities for post-secondary education opportunities, and a myriad of personal and social problems . . ." (Halpern, 1990, p. 13). A secondary program also must incorporate an independent living, community focused curricula (Dever, 1988; Gajar, Goodman, & McAfee, 1993). The need for a vocational and community-based curriculum program was further substantiated with the two Alabama studies (see Table 1).

Self-Determination and Family Involvement

Self-determination for people with disabilities is fast becoming a national priority (Browning, in press). Dr. Halloran (1993), OSERS' Secondary and Transition Program Coordinator, earmarks it as one of five major transition issues that may characterize the '90s. The goal of self-determination is for people with disabilities to learn to make choices, to set goals regarding their lives and the services they receive, and to initiate actions to achieve those goals (Federal Register, 1992). Knowlton, Turnbull, Backus, and Turnbull (1988) assert that a cornerstone of effective transition involves the students' increased exercise in making decisions about their own lives. Clearly, an emphasis needs to be given to enhancing their "abilities" and "opportunities" so that they can better plan, manage, and direct their lives and thus exert greater control over their destiny.

Nisbet, Covert, and Schuh (1992) concluded from a review of numerous studies on transition that family involvement was the most predominant theme to emerge. Effective transition program planning must involve parents and consumers as active partners in mapping their transitional plan and program (Turnbull, Bateman, & Turnbull, 1993; Wehman, 1993). Results from the two Alabama studies highlight the importance of student and family involvement in
developing and implementing the transition plan (see Table 1).

Interagency Collaboration

Interagency cooperation and planning is a critical area that must be addressed by teachers and others who work in transition (Browning, Brown, & Dunn, 1993b). The fact that both federal and state statutes mandate interagency collaboration is evidence of its importance (Stodden & Boone, 1987). Furthermore, the literature clearly attests to its importance (Bates, Bronkema, Ames, & Hess, 1992; Halloran, 1993; Wehman, 1993), as does the two Alabama studies (see Table 1).

The Proposed Program

The purpose of this proposed teacher training program is to prepare master's level students with K-12 teacher certification in mental retardation that includes an emphasis in transition. This program would be unique in Alabama in that it would be designed primarily to prepare students for teaching at the "secondary" level.

Like Auburn's other special education master's teacher certification programs, this 59 hour program also would meet the requirements in five basic areas (Curriculum and Teaching, Foundations of Professional Studies, Evaluation of Teaching and Learning, Teaching Field, and Student Teaching). Within this framework, however, the program would be innovative in that: (a) the curricula offers five knowledge-based courses in transition, (b) the supervision occurs for three quarters (instead of one) and intensively focuses on secondary programming and transition practices, (c) the students must satisfactorily complete a field-based transition project, and (d) the students will actively participate in the Alabama Annual Transition Conference.

This program would be unique in Alabama in that it would be designed primarily to prepare students for teaching at the "secondary" level.

Transition Courses

The proposed curricula for this certification program is a revised curricula of Auburn's existing K-12 teacher certification program in mental retardation. The non-highlighted courses (see Table 2) offered in the K-12 program also are included in the revised program (for example, Advanced Study of Mental Retardation, Applied Behavior Analysis). In addition, however, five content areas with a transition focus would be incorporated. Again, these are knowledge-based content areas and include: (a) Foundations of Transition, (b) Functional Assessment and Curricula, (c) Vocational and Community Preparation, (d) Self-Determination and Family Involvement, and (e) Interagency Collaboration for Transition.

Students from other teacher certification programs (LD, EC, MLH) also would take as electives (if not requirements) one or more of these transition courses. In Auburn's introductory transition course taught this past summer, for example, the 23 students enrolled represented **all** of the teacher certification programs. Thus, the impact of the revised program in mental retardation extends beyond only students enrolled in that program because students majoring in other disability specialties also would have the opportunity and benefit of acquiring transition-related knowledge and competencies.

The competencies addressed throughout these transition courses and the following teacher preparation activities are listed in Table 3. The student's plan of study is presented in Table 4. Both tables appear at the end of the text.

Table 2
Comparison of Current and Revised Program Requirements

	CURRENT PROGRAM	REVISED PROGRAM
FOUNDATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES	Applied Behavior Analysis Curriculum and Teaching MR	same same
EVALUATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING	Advanced Educational Psychology One of the following: Learning Theories Ed. Implic of Human Dev. Research and Experimentation Educational Diagnosis and Assessment	same same same • **Functional Assessment**
TEACHING FIELD	Advanced Study of MR Teaching Severe/Profound MR Prescriptive Teaching	same same • **Secondary Educational Programming** • **Foundations of Transition** • **Self-Determination/Family Involvement** • **Interagency Collaboration** • **Annual Transition Conference** • **Field-based Transition Project**
PRACTICA	Practicum (1 quarter)	• **Fall Practicum: IEP/ITP Planning/Teaching** • **Winter Practicum: Community Work Exper.** • **Spring Practicum: Interagency Participation**
ELECTIVES	Two program related courses with advisor approval	no electives

• = new transition curricula

Practica Experiences and Supervision

A second major innovative program feature is the number and type of practica. The students would be required to take three quarters of practica (Fall, Winter, Spring) to satisfactorily complete their program. While much of the practica would accompany the coursework received by the students, each practicum would focus on different aspects of secondary and transition program planning and implementation. The main focus of Practicum 1 (Fall) is the development of the IEP/ITP, secondary curriculum modification, and consumer and parental involvement in the transition process. Practicum 2 (Winter) accentuates community work experience, and Practicum 3 (Spring) emphasizes interagency collaboration and participation. Through these three practicums, the students would have experienced a wide range of program implementation considerations at the secondary level, such as functional curricula and assessment, work-adjustment sites, interagency collaboration, community-based instruction, and working with employers.

Through these three practicums, the students would have experienced a wide range of program implementation considerations at the secondary level, such as functional curricula and assessment, work-adjustment sites, interagency collaboration, community-based instruction, and working with employers.

One of three major practica sites would be school systems that have exemplary work experience programs. Over the last three years, the State Department of Education has awarded mini-grants to 32 secondary special education programs throughout the state for the purpose of encouraging the LEAs to develop community-based work instruction as one option within the transition curriculum. In cooperation with the State Department of Education and the coordinators of a select number of these programs, these sites also would be used as practica settings for students. Four of these exemplary sites are (a) a county-based Transition Program through The Vocational Education Department in the Jefferson County School District in Birmingham (Lavender, 1992), (b) a Vocational Supported Employment Program in Birmingham (Parker, 1992), (c) a Work Instruction and Work Experience Program in the Dothan Public School System (Sprayberry, 1992), and (d) a Work Instruction Program in the Mobile Public Schools (Hildebrand, 1993).

Field-Based Project

The field-based transition project is the third innovative feature of this certification program. By the end of the students' Fall quarter, they will have identified a transition project of unique interest to them to be developed and executed in an LEA setting. While there will be a set of guidelines and standards that all projects must adhere to, the very nature of these

projects could vary from student to student. The focus of the project might be, for example: (a) to help establish a "partnership" between the LEA's secondary special education program and a business or industry in the surrounding area, (b) to help develop a "functional assessment program" to be used by all parties involved in the LEA's transition program, or (c) to join in with employers in the community to help develop worksites for the secondary students.

Statewide Conference on Transition

For the past three years, Auburn University has sponsored a statewide conference on transition. This event, which is co-sponsored by the State's Divisions of Special Education, Rehabilitation Services, and Vocational Education, has been attended by over 800 participants for the first three conferences. The students enrolled in this certification program would take an active part in this annual event. In addition to being required to attend the entire conference, their assignments could include preparing and presenting a paper; helping in the planning, implementation, and/or evaluation of the conference; and serving as facilitators for small groups. The significant learning experiences for them would be to become aware of and linked to the many and varied transition activities taking place throughout the state.

Summary

Alabama's special education teacher certification programs are K-12, which logistically limits the concentration that can be devoted to the problems, issues, knowledge and competencies that are unique to either the primary or secondary level. Because of the state's urgent need to have "highly" trained teachers at the secondary level, the authors have presented a revised master's (K-12) program that gives increased emphasis to preparing secondary teachers.

This program's revised curricula includes knowledge-based courses targeted to the transition areas of Functional Assessment and Curricula, Vocational and Community Preparation, Self-Determination and Family Involvement, and Interagency Cooperation. In addition, students must satisfactorily complete (a) three quarters of practica in a variety of secondary and transition-related settings, (c) a field-based transition project, and (d) assignments with the yearly Statewide Transition Conference. It is hoped that a program such as this would improve the quality of Alabama's supply of secondary special education teachers.

Table 3

Training Needs Competencies and Courses Matrix

DOMAINS	COMPETENCIES	CURRICULUM STRATEGIES (*) A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Foundations of Transition	Identify and understand the										
	a. historical & legal antecedents of transition from school to work	•									
	b. various models of transition	•	•								
	c. federal/state legislation-regulations relevant to transition planning	•	•				•	•			
	d. concepts, definitions, and philosophies related to transition	•	•								
	e. problems & issues related to transition	•	•								
Functional Assessment	a. Conduct functional assessments (ecological inventories, analysis of behavior, student preferences & choices)				•						
	b. Synthesize/apply assessment information to transition process			•	•						
	c. Outline number of long term transition goals, short term objectives, services, & supports based on assessment information gathered			•	•				•		
	d. Use functional assessment information for IEP/ITP planning			•	•						
Functional Curricula	a. Select and/or develop appropriate curricular content in employment/education, community involvement, recreation/ leisure, emotional/physical health, home/family, & personal responsibility & relationships		•	•							
	b. Develop & implement systematic instructional programs			•							
	c. Develop community-based curricula			•							
	d. Plan & implement community-based instruction			•					•		
Self-Determination	a. Understand historical/legal antecedents for the "consumer" movement	•				•					
	b. Understand the concepts of self-empowerment					•					
	c. Identify & learn self-determination skills (goal-setting, problem solving)			•		•					
	d. Develop & implement instructional activities to teach self-determination skills			•		•					

			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Family Involvement	a.	Demonstrate knowledge of family support services, referral procedures, eligibility, & cost		•				•				
	b.	Demonstrate knowledge about family systems theory, & apply this knowledge in way that is culturally sensitive						•				
	c.	Conduct a family preference inventory for vocational & community skills		•	•			•				
	d.	Develop skills in collaborative goal setting with families		•	•			•				
Demonstrate/ Vocational Preparation	a.	Knowledge of vocational assessment strategies		•	•	•						
	b.	Select & implement appropriate vocational training techniques		•	•							
	c.	Select & implement appropriate vocational curriculum content		•	•							
	d.	Participate in community-based work experience programs		•	•					•	•	
Community Preparation	a.	Identify & understand residential alternatives for young adults			•		•					
	b.	Identify and understand the importance of community "networking"			•		•					
	c.	Identify and understand leisure resources & activities provided for community citizens			•		•			•	•	
Interagency Collaboration	a.	Learn eligibility requirements for various service agencies	•	•					•			•
	b.	Demonstrate knowledge of teaming relationships & effective methods of working with individuals from other disciplines							•			•
	c.	Demonstrate knowledge of available community, state, & national resources and the ability to access them							•			•
	d.	Develop cooperative relationships with individuals/agencies involved in the transition process (e.g., employers, community-based personnel, vocational rehabilitation, vocational education)							•			•

••competencies addressed through revised/new courses and practica for transition emphasis

A =	course(5)	Transition: A Foundation	G =	Seminar (1)	Interagency Collaboration
B =	course(5)	Transition: Programs and Practices	H =	Practicum(3)	School-based
C =	course(5)	Curriculum and Teaching	I =	Practicum(3)	Community-based
D =	seminar(1)	Functional Assessment	J =	Practicum(3)	Interagency-based
E =	seminar(1)	Self-Determination			
F =	seminar(1)	Family Involvement			

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Table 4

The Students' Program Plan

Summer (16 hours)			
•	**RSE 537**	**Transition: A Foundation**	**5**
	RSE 601	Advanced Study of Mental Retardation	5
•	**RSE 650A**	**Seminar: Self-Determination**	**1**
	RSE 623	Applied Behavior Analysis	5
Fall (14 hours)			
	RSE 652	Curriculum and Teaching	5
	RSE 602	Educational Diagnosis and Assessment	5
•	**RSE 650B**	**Seminar: Functional Assessment**	**1**
••	**RSE 695**	**Practicum (school-based)**	**3**
Winter (13 hours)			
	FED 617	Advanced Educational Psychology	4
	RSE 649	Teaching Students with Severe/Profound MR	5
••	**RSE 695**	**Practicum (community-based)**	**3**
•	**RSE 650C**	**Seminar: Family Involvement**	**1**
Spring (16 hours)			
	FED 618/619/661	Learning Theory/Ed. Implications/Research & Experimentation	4
•	**RSE 653**	**Transition: Programs and Practices**	**5**
•	**RSE 650D**	**Seminar: Interagency Collaboration**	**1**
••	**RSE 695**	**Practicum (Interagency-based)**	**3**
•••		**Annual Statewide Conference on Transition**	**0**
	RSE 646	Field-Based Project	3

TOTAL HOURS = 59

- • New or revised courses
- •• New practica emphasis and sequencing
- ••• The annual statewide conference on transition that is hosted by Auburn University

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Self-Determination: An Essential Ingredient in Transition

Philip Browning

Since the 1960's, the rights, responsibilities and opportunities for millions of Americans with disabilities have dramatically changed due to, among other things, the enactment of civil rights and legislation. These safeguards for their individual rights and opportunities, coupled with their on-going consumerism movement of three decades, has increasingly resulted in their asserting rights on their own behalf. Also, they have increasingly become self-advocates for their own interests as full-fledged citizens in American life. What we have seen emerging from the evolution of these empowering social changes for the past 30 years is the term **"SELF-DETERMINATION"**, which now is receiving national attention. Consider, for example, that:

Clearly, our state's youth in transition need to increasingly discover the right to self-determination, for it is through this self-empowerment that their level of human decency, pride, and sense of self-worth will be heightened and their quality of life enhanced.

- In 1989, **self-determination** was the focus of a national conference sponsored by Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS),
- In 1992, **self-determination** was one of four national research priorities for OSERS' special education research program
- In 1993, **self-determination** was legislatively earmarked to promote the philosophy of independent living, empowerment and productivity for individuals with disabilities

Self-determination is also emerging as a frontrunner in the transition movement. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act addresses the need for transition personnel to embellish the students' "preferences" and "interests" into their IEP/ITP transition plans and programs. Dr. Halloran, OSERS' Secondary and Transition Program Coordinator, highlighted it as one of "five" major transition issues that may characterize the '90s. Dr. Szymanski, a national leader in transition, stated that self-determination and autonomy should be the GOAL of transition. Those of you who were here last year remember that they were our keynoters. In keeping with this agenda, the purpose of my delivery this morning is: (a) to discuss with you the general nature of self-determination, and (b) to offer two strategies for better enabling our youngsters to becoming the architects in drafting their own goals and plans for their future.

Four definitions of self-determination are introduced and briefly compared. Deci (1980) considers self-determination to mean the freedom to decide for oneself, the freedom to chose one's own behaviors according to one's own inner needs, thoughts, and feelings. Ward (1993) says that self-determination refers to ". . . both the attitudes that lead people to define goals for themselves and to their ability to take the initiative to achieve those goals" (p. xvi). Halloran (1993) considers it to mean (a) running risks, (b) challenging rules, (c) acquiring resources, (d) knowing basic human rights, (e) taking responsibility for one's life, and (f) asking for help because it is wanted or needed (p. 5). Finally, Wehmeyer (1992) refers to it as "... the attitudes and abilities required to act as the primary causal agent in one's life and to make choices regarding one's actions free from undue external influence or interference" (p. 305).

. . . self-determination leads to enhanced motivation and performance. Also, others note that a substantial number of experiments show that the opportunity to make direct decisions and therefore exercise control has been associated with an increased perception of psychological and emotional well being.

These definitions appear to be quite similar at first glance; however, there are major differences among them. Deci's definition makes no reference to one's "ability" to decide and choose. Rather, central to this definition is the condition of freedom to engage in these acts, yet it is not clear whether that freedom is intended as being within the individual (psychological), outside the individual (opportunity), or both. Ward's definition is an entirely person (attitude and ability) centered one with no reference to external conditions or opportunity. Of course, the "attitudes" that lead people to define goals certainly has implications for those whose locus of control is external or those who are vulnerable to a state of learned helplessness. Halloran (1993) also presents a person centered-only definition; however, he identifies a set of specific action behaviors that reflect one's engagement in self-determination. Like Ward's "initiatives", the nature of these behaviors also imply the importance of the individual's motivation. Wehmeyer's definition is the most comprehensive in that it mentions not only the attitudes and abilities that are "required" for one to act as their own agent, but also alludes to the external opportunities necessary for one to be able to engage in those actions of their own choice.

Choice-making is the central feature of this self-directed, psychological construct. Choice making, as a decision-making process, involves the expression of preferences, as well as implies the ability to select among alternatives. Choosing thus becomes an act, in and of itself, and an indication of the ability to make a decision based upon prior experiences, present needs, and future goals (Guess, Benson, & Siegel-Causey, 1985). The nature and importance

of having choices and being able to make choices among alternatives is a highly valued human condition. As noted by Parent (1993),

> **If individuals are to experience personal satisfaction and quality of life, regardless of whether or not they have a disability, it is critical for them to have the right to make choices, express preferences, and exercise control over their lives"** (p. 20).

Surely, few of you if any who are here this morning would question the human value of self-determination and choice making. Clearly, it is unrealistic to expect students to become well adjusted active members of their community if they are not afforded opportunities to become active members in decisions that affect that future, is it not? With that, however, let me underscore the fact that its significance extends beyond its philosophical appeal and a human condition to be cherished.

Deci, an authority on self-determination, documents the empirical evidence that shows that increased self-determination leads to enhanced motivation and performance. Also, others note that a substantial number of experiments show that individual choice and control enhances performance outcome for a variety of tasks and, that the opportunity to make direct decisions and therefore exercise control has been associated with an increased perception of psychological and emotional well-being (Knowlton, Turnbull, Bacus, & Turnbull, 1988).

Similarly, research on choice-making has shown that with both animals and humans that the "mere illusion" of choice-making leads to **increased performance** (Perlmuter & Monty, 1977). As well, research demonstrates the positive effects of choice-making activities on such areas as (a) learning, (b) classroom behavior, (c) skill generalization, and (d) independent functioning in both regular and special education (Shevin & Klein, 1984).

One of several reasons why we need to consider its viability is the relationship between individuals' self-determination and their post-school outcomes. This is especially germane to us in the field of transition. In a just completed study in this state, for example, I found that over 80% of Alabama's rehabilitation counselors assigned to work with high school students reported that their student/clients' vocational success was either **"much related"** (46%) or **"highly related"** (36%) to their clients' level of self-determination (Browning & Brechin, 1993).

In spite of the philosophical, empirical and practical reasons that underscores its importance, self-determination has received relatively little attention in our fields. Several explanations have been offered for this omission.

Models

Historically, rehabilitation practitioners and special educators have operated on a **"medical" "functional limitations"** or **"deviancy"** model. According to many, including myself, these fix-um up "deficit" focused models have diminished our ability to see severely handicapped persons as individuals who are not capable of even making a choice, "let alone the right choice" (Guess & Siegel-Causey, 1985, p. 236).

Intervention

Another historical reason is the **intervention strategy** utilized, especially with individuals with severe disability. It was not too long ago that we employed a highly sophisticated, systematic controlling intervention approach to training and remediation. This behavioral technology helped us to determine precisely (a) what we wanted the persons to learn, (b) how they would be taught, and (c) where the instruction would reside. Guess what? Someone told me that they did have a choice in the selection of the reinforcer to be used. I said, "Yes, which in turn increased the controlling power of the training over that person."

Fortunately, this behavioral technology has seen some shift from provider to recipient control. These more self-instructional strategies, referred to as cognitive-behavior modification, involve procedures designed to teach learners to take an active role in modifying their own behavior and thus becoming their own change agent.

Empowerment Locus of Control

Another issue related to self-determination is **empowerment**, a process by which individuals gain control over their own lives. Emener (1991) proposed a locus of control empowerment model that includes **"external systems"** as one of four areas. According to some, it is here where the problem resides. Parent (1993), for example, says:

> **It has become increasingly evident that the powerlessness and lack of self-direction often felt by people with disabilities are more frequently related to the attitudes and practices of (1) caregivers, (2) service providers, (3) funding agencies, (4) social institutions, and (5) society, in general, rather than to any limitations or impairments resulting from the disability itself** (p. 21). (my seriation)

Dr. Szymanski (1993) at last year's conference also spoke to the significance of external systems within the transitional context. She said to us then:

> **We [professionals] must relinquish our perceived control and affirm the rights of students and families to control the transition process, thus acknowledging our role as supports to students and families rather than as gate-keepers and decision-makers** (p. 25).

In summary, the recognition of and belief in the importance and worth of self-determination is a necessary prerequisite for the "instillation" and "nurturance" of its philosophy and practice in transition. Additionally, however, it is essential that we incorporate into our transitional programs curricula strategies for enhancing the students **ABILITIES** and **OPPORTUNITIES** to more actively and effectively partake in self-determining and self-directing their own lives. Shevin and Klein (1984) concur by saying:

> **". . . the successful fostering of choice-making will require both systematic teaching of new skills, and provision of opportunities to practice those skills in the classroom and in the natural settings such as home and in the community"** (p. 161). (my emphasis)

Strategies

This morning, I wish to offer two strategies for enhancing the self-determination of students in transition. The first strategy is the teaching of cognitive-behavioral, decision-making skills for increasing the students' **ability** to become more self-determining in planning and directing their own future. The second strategy is through self-advocacy groups that allow students the **opportunity** to participate in activities that are self-determining in nature.

Abilities

A major goal of ours in transition is to teach our high school students the skills, behaviors, and attitudes needed for their successful transition to employment, community adjustment and independent living. Fortunately, we have available to us a large reservoir of behaviorally-based, daily-living skills curricula (travel, shopping, money management) for helping them to meet this objective. Also, however, there is a need for a supplemental, if not alternative, strategy which equips and therefore enables students/clients with the ability to make choices and decisions. In essence, the critical components of independence are peoples' capability and opportunity to "**consent**" directly to the events of their life. Therefore, one's independence, in this sense

> "**. . . does not put primary emphasis on the acquisition of skills so one might perform tasks (e. g., washing clothes or cooking meals) by oneself; instead, it emphasizes skill development concurrent with expanded opportunities for making decisions.**" (Knowlton et. al., 1988, pp. 46-47)

Thus, in addition to the basic behavioral living skills, other complementary, "**cognitive-behavioral" decision-making**" skills also are critical, especially if our goal includes augmenting the students' level of self-determination. Furthermore, their acquisition should not be assumed to be a natural occurrence, but rather " . . . "the result of purposeful strategies, properly implemented, to achieve the desired outcome of independence" (Halloran, 1993, p. 5).

A transition curriculum must embody self-directed, decision-making skills, including:

- Goal setting which is an important and necessary ingredient for self-determination. How can one have a sense of self-determination, for example, if they are unaware of the nature and importance of goal setting, as well as ill equipped to employ important strategies for goal attainment?

- Social problem solving which is an important and necessary ingredient for self-determination. How can one be expected to attain goals, for example, if they cannot engage in identifying and solving the problems that present obstacles to their being able to attain the goals they set?

- Requesting assistance which is an important and necessary ingredient for self-determination. How can one be expected to solve many of their problems, for example, if they are unaware of the nature and importance of asking of help, as well as ill equipped to employ this enabling strategy for goal attainment?

Collectively, these decision-making skills would provide students with the abilities (a) to set goals for themselves, (b) to solve at least some of their own problems, (c) to generate choices and make decisions among them, as well as (d) to request assistance in pursuing their plans. The set of self-determination abilities are characterized as being more **cognitive**, and **generic** than many of the basic functional living skills that are commonly taught, such as cooking, grocery shopping, banking, and budgeting.

Most definitely, this self-directed skill must be taught to students in transition. In other words, how can students be expected to have meaningful input into their IEP/ITP goals and plans if they have no awareness of, or skills in goal-setting and attainment?

Such self-directing abilities are especially crucial for those who do not view themselves as a causal agent with respect to the outcomes concerning their own lives, which is a vulnerability of persons with severe disabilities. The psychological construct that pertains to this type of individual is **"helplessness,"** which refers to those who perceive little or no relationship between their actions and the outcomes of those actions (Seigleman, 1975). Most of you are familiar with the name Siegleman, who researched and penned this psychological construct. Remember the classical experiment in which the dogs in the control group were shocked but had no escape from the setting; whereas, those in the experimental group were also shocked but had an escape hatch. After repeated shocks, both sets of dogs were put into the same locale which had an escape hatch. They were all shocked simultaneously. The experimental dogs escaped, whereas, the control dogs just remained there to be shocked. "Helplessness": no perceived relationship between one's actions and the outcome of those actions.

Goal-setting

> **Goal-setting is a cognitive-behavioral process that pertains to what an individual is trying to accomplish, and the process of setting and attaining goals serves as immediate regulators of human action** (Locke, Shaw, Sarri, & Lathman, 1981).

This ability enables self-management, direction, and achievement, all of which are essential features of self-determination, successful transition, and independent living. Research on goal-setting and attainment represents one of the most "robust" and "replicable" findings in the psychological literature. In a comprehensive review and analysis, for example, 99 out of 100 studies reported that specific, hard goals produced better performance than easy, do-your-best, or no goals at all (Locke, Shaw, Sarri, & Lathman, 1981). This extensive analysis, and those conducted by others, also reported other consistent findings: (1) goals appear to regulate performance most predictably when they are expressed in specific quantitative terms rather than vague intentions such as try hard, and (2) knowledge of performance in relation to the goal appears necessary if the goal is to improve performance.

Most definitely, this self-directed skill must be taught to students in transition. In other words, how can students be expected to have meaningful input into their IEP/ITP goals and plans if they have no awareness of, or skills in goal-setting and attainment?

Social Problem-Solving

The importance of this enabling self-determination ability is noted by Mithaug, Martin, and Agran (1987), who are of the opinion that the "**core**" of a transition program should focus upon teaching students to solve problems in the classrooms, community sites, and work settings.

> **"The importance of secondary students acquiring good problem-solving skills cannot be overemphasized. Not only are these skills demanded by the school curriculum, but they are required for successful adjustments to social and life situations during postschool years. To survive in our increasingly complex society, people need to be able to solve problems on an ongoing and independent basis.** (Mithang, Martin & Agran, 1987, p. 218)

Social problem-solving is a cognitive-behavioral process that can enable one to more effectively and independently manage and regulate one's own life. This skill, according to Wehmeyer (1992), " . . . goes hand-in-hand with learning to set goals and to take the necessary steps to achieve them" (p. 309). Like goal-setting, the stages in the problem-solving process have been conceptualized as a set of relatively discrete cognitive abilities or covert thought processes that mediate behaviors. A consensus exists among the various proponents as to what constitutes the problem-solving stages. These stages are reflected in the model below.

A Model for Social Problem-Solving

IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM	What is wrong? What is the goal?
SIZE UP THE PROBLEM	Is it a big problem? Is it necessary to solve the problem? Is the problem consistent? Will the problem get worse? Can anything be done about the problem?
THINK UP SOLUTIONS	Are there ways you can solve it by yourself? Are there ways other people can help? Are there ways to live with the problem?
DECIDE ON A SOLUTION	Which option is best of the alternatives?
STUDY WHAT HAPPENS	Watch how things turn out
	Decide if you need to keep working on the problem

Even though problem solving has been widely taught and researched with other targeted groups (for example, children, adolescents, and adults in mental health settings, students in elementary school), it has received relatively little attention in our field. There are a few exceptions, including studies with elementary-age learning disabled students, learning disabled adolescents and mentally retarded adolescents and young adults. I and my colleagues have just completed a study on teaching problem solving skills to nearly 100 secondary students with mild learning disabilities (Browning, Nave, White, & Barkin, in process). In general, the results of this and other such studies support the contention that adolescents with learning handicaps can be taught to employ a social problem-solving process.

Requesting Assistance

Requesting assistance, a self-directing skill, also is closely allied with goal setting and problem solving. With respect to those with mild learning handicaps, Browden (1987) says that ". . . an important aspect of life adjustment involves the degree to which individuals are capable of independently handling problems or of securing appropriate assistance to handle successfully the situations in which they find themselves." (p.79)

"Asking for help" is a type of assertiveness, cognitive behavioral strategy that facilitates personal and social interactions throughout life. The ability to solicit, obtain, and use help is an adaptive learning skill which is relevant across lifespan and increases the likelihood of future success (Nelson-LeGall, 1985). It also requires a level of cognitive sophistication in that for one to initiate help-seeking:

> **. . . one must become aware of obstacles to goal attainment, must learn to view other people as resources valuable for goal achievement, and must learn means of enlisting others to help attain these goals (Nelson-LeGall, 1985, pp. 70-71).**

Since the 1980s, there has been an "exponential" increase of theoretical and empirical activity related to this skill. It is therefore surprising that the subject is practically nonexistent in the literature on exceptional students. One exception is the "Asking for Help" curriculum developed by me and my research colleagues (Browning, White, Nave, & Barkin, 1986).

One critical matter is our recognition of the importance of skills for enabling self-determination. A social validation of the skills I have suggested this morning resulted from a statewide survey including 170 secondary special education teachers. Using a five-point Likert Scale, I asked the teachers among other things of their interest in each skill area. The combined percentage who answered "very interested" or "interested" for each skill was (a) 76% for **Goal Setting**, (b) 88% for **Problem Solving**, and (c) 76% for **Requesting Assistance** (Browning, 1992).

A Model for the Requesting Assistance Curriculum

WHY?	People should ask for help because is smart to ask for help. In fact, most people ask for help often. It is smart to ask for help because it is often necessary, and even when it is not necessary it is often helpful.
WHEN?	It is smart to ask for help when: . . . the problem is important . . . you are in a hurry . . . it is convenient . . . the problem continues to get worse . . . you are in trouble
WHO?	Some of the most important people to ask for help are: . . . people you feel close too . . . people paid to help . . . people who are emergency helpers
WHAT?	Some of the different times in which you might ask for help are: . . . when you are upset . . . when you are sick or hurt . . . when you go shopping . . . when you are at home . . . when you are at work . . . when you want to have fun
HOW?	Four important steps in how to ask for help are: . . . get the person's attention . . . ask the person for assistance . . . keep asking the person until you get what you need . . . thank the person

Summary

In summary, does every teen need to be "formally" taught these abilities? No! Many youngsters acquire these skills in other ways such as either through the modeling of their parents and siblings in their up-bringing, through their own psychological disposition and initiative, or through an enriched climate of self-determination opportunities afforded them. There remains, however, a sizable portion of our nation's youth who need to be equipped with these abilities, and it is for these youth that this curricula in intended. Consider, for example:

- those youth who seem to be less than motivated to take charge of their lives,
- those youth who do not see themselves as causal agents of their own behavior,
- those youth who fit the "external" locus of control mold,

- those youth who are especially vulnerable to a state of helplessness,
- those youth who have been provided with limited choice-making opportunities,

The need for these self-determination abilities of **"goal-setting," "social problem solving,"** and **"requesting assistance,"** are based on the recognition that our transitional programs fall short of instilling in their students enabling self-directing skills with which to choose, decide, and express interests and preferences regarding their own destiny. In addition to their being provided the freedom and opportunity to choose, decide and express, however, it is essential that the skills to which I have spoken be taught to them. They are enabling skills for self-determination. Such skills are sorely needed to enhance their ability to plan, manage, and direct their own lives and thus exert greater control over their own future.

Opportunities

The second important enabling strategy is **self-advocacy**, which is an essential component of self-determination (Ward, 1993). Advocacy at the personal level involves efforts made by individuals to (a) speak for and to take action on their own behalf, (b) to impact upon decisions and situations which effect their lives, and (c) to reach their highest possible level of independence. It is a constellation of one's stating their own preferences and interests, setting one's own goals, mapping-out one's own plans, and acquiring resources for one's own cause.

If those of us in the room this morning can increase our understanding of self-determination, develop and refine strategies for effectively augmenting it, and help to insure that these strategies are practiced in our transition programs, then significant gains will have been made in better preparing our students in transition to live a more self-directed and satisfying life.

Self-advocacy has been underway in this country for nearly three decades for people with disabilities. A critical aspect of this empowerment movement has been the establishment of **self-advocacy groups**, including those for people with developmental disabilities (Rhoades, Browning, & Thorin, 1986). Through this process of peer group identification, the members learn (a) the right to choice-making, (b) the right to services, (c) the right to consumer control, and (d) the right to citizenship.

Thus, one way to instill self-advocacy is through self-advocacy groups, which emphasizes the **empowerment** of group members to assist one another, rather than to depend entirely upon the direction of teachers, counselors, and other providers. In this respect, the self-advocacy group is consistent with the changing role of the student needing help, or from being a **passive recipient**, to an **"active" participant** who can make choices among alternatives regarding their transition goals, plans, and programs. The

results of a national survey (Browning, Thorin, & Rhoades, 1984) lend empirical support to the importance of self-advocacy groups for the developmentally disabled. Of the 96 advisors we surveyed, 98% of them indicated that they had noted an increase in self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-confidence for nearly half of the members for each of the 80 groups whose membership body had shown this type of change.

While self-advocacy groups have been formed mainly for individuals of "post-school age," they undoubtedly would be an invaluable experience for high school students in transition. One such demonstration is reported by Gould and McTaggard (1988), who implemented a self-advocacy group for 13 students (ages 17-21). The overall results of this seven month activity indicated that these students were willing and able to better self advocate for their own transition. In summary, students through self-advocacy groups would have the opportunity (a) to better learn the right to speak out and be heard, (b) to choice-making, and (c) to consumer control. Also, this opportunity would allow them to not only partake in self-determination activities, but actually utilize the self-directed skills taught them in school.

Summary

Clearly, our state's youth in transition need to increasingly discover the right to self-determination, for it is through this self-empowerment that their level of human decency, pride, and sense of self-worth will be heightened and their quality of life enhanced. Also, if those of us in the room this morning can increase our understanding of self-determination, develop and refine strategies for effectively augmenting it, and help to insure that these strategies are practiced in our transition programs, then significant gains will have been made in better preparing our students in transition to live a more self-directed and satisfying life. The two strategies I have spoken too, abilities and opportunities, are intended as one step for helping us in Alabama to advance this mission.

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The Transition of Emotionally Disturbed Youth in Alabama

Rebecca S. Curtis and Cheryll G. Glisson

The transition of emotionally disturbed youth in the State of Alabama presents a microcosm of issues that affect transition of emotionally disturbed youth nationwide. Among these issues are: (a) differences found in service provider systems; (b) a lack of consensus in the terminology used regarding this population; (c) federal legislation as it impacts a changing definition for the seriously emotionally disturbed; and, (d) the impact of the numbers of youth who are currently being served through special education by the State. The purpose of this paper is to briefly address each of these issues and their implications with respect to transition.

Differences in Systems

Special educators and rehabilitator who work together to provide transition services for the emotionally disturbed may find themselves at odds with one another due to differences that drive each system, such as statutory definitions for disability, eligibility standards, and evaluative criteria (Hanley-Maxwell & Szymanski, 1992). These and other system differences are exemplified by the fact that special education is an entitlement program; whereas, vocational rehabilitation services are contingent upon eligibility.

Special educators and rehabilitators who work together to provide transition services for the emotionally disturbed may find themselves at odds with one another due to differences that drive each system.

Unfortunately, the difference between entitlement and eligibility may result in a lack of provision of services for some youth, including the emotionally disturbed. Students who are classified by education as entitled to special programs, for example, may not be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. Conversely, students with physical disabilities may not be in need of special education programs yet considered eligible for vocational rehabilitation services (Szymanski, Hanley-Maxwell & Asselin, 1992).

Differences between the two systems also show themselves in the end result of assessment and evaluation, that is, the identification of the emotionally disturbed. Vocational rehabilitation utilizes a diagnostic label provided by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual-Revised (DMS-III-R) to identify those who are considered emotionally disturbed. This label assists in the determination of eligibility criteria which will lead to provision of services. However, the use of a DSM-III-R label is not required of children who are entitled to special

services in school. This and other differences between the two systems often result in delays of service provision and confusion over who will receive transition services.

Terminology

The two individual systems have many ways of naming the same group, which often results in complications and confusion both within and between professional groups (Gadow, 1986). Special education, for example, uses terminology to describe the emotionally disturbed as defined by Public Law 94-142. Federally, this group is identified as "seriously emotionally disturbed." Within the State of Alabama, however, the same group is identified as "**emotionally conflicted.**" Other states may utilize the federal definition terminology, or, as seen in Alabama, they may use a different label, such as emotionally handicapped, emotionally impaired, behaviorally disordered, behaviorally disturbed, and, socially maladjusted.

By contrast, state vocational rehabilitation assigns DSM-III-R labels to those who may receive services due to emotional and/or mental disabilities. Frequently seen DSM-III-R labels used in conjunction with this group may be based on external or internalizing behaviors associated with emotional and/or mental problems. Some of these labels are: Attention-deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Anxiety Disorders; Depressive Disorders, and, Bipolar Disorder.

The two individual systems (special education and vocational rehabilitation) have many ways of naming the same group, which often results in complications and confusion both within and between professional groups.

Irrespective of the terminology system used, the very nature of the disability of emotional disturbance and the often accompanying presence of chronic disciplinary problems associated with it may not only exclude such labeled youth from services, but also impact the attitudes many hold regarding this group. As such, practitioners who work with these youths may well find that they are not immune to prevailing negative attitudes associated with the emotionally disturbed.

Federal Legislation

Federal legislation has defined the provision of transition services for emotionally conflicted youth. Also, federal legislation has and will continue to define the constituency of this group. Interestingly, however, the term socially maladjusted is not used in conjunction with the current federal definition of seriously emotionally disturbed. This is significant in that the Council for Children (CEC) now is seeking to include the term socially maladjusted with behavior disorders as part of the federal definition of characteristics that help to identify the population of seriously emotionally disturbed (Weinberg, 1992).

The inclusion of the term socially maladjusted in defining who is seriously emotionally disturbed may prove confusing and controversial. Depending upon varying practitioners' views, for example, social maladjustment may stem from emotional disturbance, economic deprivation, or cultural variations affecting behavior (McIntyre, 1993). Clearly, controversy surrounds this issue with special educators and other interested parties taking sides in the fight to **provide** or **prohibit** services for those considered **deserving** or **non-deserving** (McIntyre, 1993). Through the impact of federal legislation alone, the population of emotionally conflicted youth may burgeon beyond the capacity of special education and rehabilitation services available.

Numbers of Youths Served

Certain projections can be made concerning the future of youth with emotional conflicts in the State of Alabama. Figures from the Alabama State Department of Education (FY 1992: DATABOOK) reflect an **increase in the number** of students who are emotionally conflicted and a **shortage of personnel** trained to work with this population. These two factors, combined with funding issues, will affect the future of education and determine the focus of transition outcomes for the emotionally conflicted.

In the state of Alabama, for the 1991-1992 school year, students with emotional conflicts dropped out at alarming rates. At the age of 16, the age at which a child may legally leave school, 90% of those exiting the system did so by dropping out. Of the 17 year-old students, 61% dropped out, while only 33% graduated with a diploma, certification or fulfillment of their Individual Education Plan requirements.

In the decade from 1980 to 1989, the number of students served in classrooms for the emotionally conflicted in Alabama rose from 3,792 to 5,688 for an increase of 50%. Only four other categories showed such significant gains, including (a) learning disabilities (74.9%), (b) speech impairments (42.8%), (c) hard of hearing (20%), and (d) orthopedic impairments (16.3%). All other types of exceptionality declined during this ten-year period (FY 1992: DATABOOK).

As of December, 1991, the number of children in Alabama (ages 6 through 21) who were receiving services for emotional conflicts totaled 5,019. Those within the age range of 14 to 21 and thus eligible for current transition services accounted for 1,832 of the total (FY 1992: DATABOOK). Also, students between the ages of six and thirteen who will be meeting the age of transition between the years 1996-2003 totaled 3,187. This category of younger students represents a 57%

increase over the same 8-year span evidenced by present figures of 14 to 21 year-old students (FY 1992: DATABOOK).

Legislative changes, as well as a probable changing definition (McIntyre, 1993), will affect the count of those entitled to services. Also, societal expectations for younger students and the attitudes of parents, teachers, and administrators may also impact current numbers. The low number of students reported in classrooms for the emotionally conflicted in kindergarten and first grade, for example, may be due to the hesitancy of parents and school districts to classify a young child with this label.

Furthermore, in Alabama, some school systems have not identified a single student with emotional conflicts in their special education classrooms. This could be due to the philosophical approach that students may outgrow their problems, or to the fact that some school districts have no teachers trained to work in this field (Bogie & Martin, 1991). Irrespective, the result may mean that a child will go without needed services for a period of time.

While expectations and attitudes may account for the low incidence of emotionally conflicted youth in the early elementary grades, other factors influence the numbers of students in secondary schools. In the state of Alabama, for the 1991-1992 school year, students with emotional conflicts dropped out at alarming rates. At the age of 16, the age at which a child may legally leave school, 90% of those exiting the system did so by dropping out. Of the 17 year-old students, 61% dropped out, while only 33% graduated with a diploma, certification or fulfillment of their Individual Education Plan requirements. Figures for those remaining in school until their 18th year improve somewhat. Specifically, 68% of 18 year-old emotionally conflicted youth exited the system through graduation and 27% dropped out (FY 1992: DATABOOK). One could conclude from these figures alone that the school systems are not meeting the needs of this population of students. It may be that these youth fail to see the relevancy to school and they simply give up on education (Wehman, 1992). Future solutions will need to address the specific problems and needs of students with emotional conflicts if we are to keep them in the educational system.

Summary

Issues such as those presented in this paper most definitely impact upon the nature of transition services and outcomes for emotionally disturbed youth within the State, as well as the nation. Given the controversies and confusion surrounding these issues, it is most understandable that secondary special education teachers and rehabilitation service providers would have many "who", "what", and "how" "questions when working with this target group in transition from school-to-work and community. Unfortunately, answers will not be forthcoming or complete until these and other issues affecting the transition of this population are addressed.

In the State of Alabama, special education and vocational rehabilitation have the potential to converge service provision and positively impact individual lives of its population of emotionally disturbed youth. The area of transition provides the focus of such efforts within the State and nation.

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Transition:
Implications for Rehabilitation Counselors

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Transition planning has been identified as a need for students with disabilities since Madeline Will first proposed a model of transition from school to work in 1984 (Alabama Department of Education, 1992. Recent legislation continues to support efforts focused on transition issues (Chadsey-Rusch, Rusch & Phelps, 1988). However, a lack of coordinated services remains a persistent problem for many youth with disabilities and their families during the transition process. Vocational rehabilitation can provide case management services (Neubert, Danehey, & Gradel, 1992), but it seems they provide limited services for individuals who are still in the school system.

Students need to prepare for transition into the following adult role areas: financial management, personal management, living arrangements, advocacy/guardianship, community participation, transportation and medical management (Alabama Department of Education, 1992). This paper will show that transition from school to community life involves more than one agency (Heal, Copher, & Rusch, 1990) and that rehabilitation counselors serve a primary role in the transition process (Szymanski, Hanley-Maxwell & Asselin, 1990).

One major problem area in transition counseling is the lack of assigned responsibility for coordinating transition services. Anyone can initiate the transition process; however, someone should take the lead or collaboration will be unlikely. Vocational rehabilitation is the proper agency to assume this lead because of their concern for people with disabilities over the long run.

Public Law 101-476, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), mandates transition services for students with disabilities. IDEA was passed in 1990 to amend P.L. 984-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act. This piece of legislation defines transition services as a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to postschool activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include

instruction, community experiences, the development of employment, and other postschool adult living objectives and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation: (§101-476). Section 602 further specifies that the student's IEP shall include a statement of needed transition services beginning no later than the age 16, for some students beginning at the age of 14 or younger, and annually thereafter. Additionally, when deemed appropriate, a statement of the interagency responsibilities before the student leaves the school setting must be provided (§101-476).

The purpose of IDEA is to (a) assure that all students with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate public education which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs, (b) to assure the rights of children and their parents are protected, (c) to assist states and localities to provide for the education of all children with disabilities, and (d) to assess and assure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities. Children covered by the term "disability" include children with: mental retardation, hearing impairments, deafness, speech or language impairments, visual impairments, blindness, deaf-blind, serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, multidisabilities, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, and specific learning disabilities (Alabama Department of Education, Division of Rehabilitation Services, 1992). IDEA is a very positive development which should not be minimized. We should fully take advantage of this law and what it means (Wehman, 1992).

Components of Transition

The most common transition patterns are further vocational/technical or college education, employment, entering military service, and/or marriage. Youth with disabilities must make this transition from school to as much independence as possible. Therefore, they may be in a position of changing from entitlement programs to eligibility programs - special education to vocational rehabilitation (Botterbusch, 1989). Although there are several models of transition, most models have these three features: input and foundation, process, and outcome (Botterbusch, 1989).

Input and Foundation

Essential components of input and foundation in the transition process include: consumer input (Wehman, Kregel, & Barcus, 1985); the acquisition of the following skills: job searching, job maintenance, job-related functional academics, mobility and transportation, recreational activities,m paid jobs in the community before graduation, counseling for postsecondary options, referral to adult agencies before graduation, self-advocacy skills for job and community, parent training and self-advocacy, and ITPs (Karge, Patton, & de la Garza, 1992); individualized planning, vocational preparation, academic remediation support, counseling, support systems and services, job seeking and placement, follow-up and along (Rojewski, 1992); the use of transition teams (Steere, Wood, Panscofar, & Butterworth, 1990); and the sharing of professional information and skills (Syzmanski, Hanley-Maxwell, & Asselin, 1990).

Process

In the process of transition planning, the following items have been identified as essential components of transition counseling: interagency cooperation, follow-up (Wehman, Kregel, & Barcus, 1985); developing a personal profile, identifying employment outcomes (Steere, Wood, Panscofar, & Butterworth, 1990); and service delivery by one or two primary facilitators and other team member consultants (Syzmanski, Hanley-Maxwell, & Asselin, 1990).

Brown, et al indicated that Individualized Transition Plans (ITPs) should be comprehensive and individualized. They should have the involvement of the parents and guardians and should have definitely defined sending and receiving personnel. The ITP should include the focused expertise of competent related service personnel and directed instruction in a variety of actual subsequent environments. Finally, the ITP should be longitudinal in nature (Brown, Pumpian, Baumgart, et al, 1981).

Outcomes

Identified as essential outcomes of transition counseling are: formal individualized student plans, multiple employment outcomes (Wehman, Kregel, & Barcus, 1985); income maintenance, residential placement, leisure, social support, adult education, health care, and transportation (Halpern, Benz, & Lindstrom, 1992); a comprehensive supported employment program (Karge, Patton, & de la Garza, 1992); and measurement of plan effectiveness, evaluation of compatibility, and evaluation of the overall transition experience (Steere, Wood, Panscofar, & Butterworth, 1990).

Although there are several models of transition, there are two common themes necessary for a transition model to be considered successful: (a) the student should be the main focus of the process, not the services that will be delivered to the student, and (b) the transition from school to community life clearly involves the cooperation of the school system with adult services providers, one major contributor being vocational rehabilitation services.

Implications for Rehabilitation Counselors

One major problem area in transition counseling is the lack of assigned responsibility for coordinating transition services (Halpern, Benz, & Lindstrom, 1992). Anyone can initiate the transition process; however, someone should take the lead or collaboration will be unlikely (Chadsey-Rusch, Rusch, & Phelps, 1988). Vocational rehabilitation is the proper agency to assume this lead because of their concern for people with disabilities over the long run (Fenton & Keller, 1981).

Although Special Education should provide educational services that enhance the employability of the student in transition, Vocational Rehabilitation must be able to provide rehabilitation services that enhance employment outcomes (Kortering & Edgar, 1988) and promote employment and successful adult living (Karge, Patton, & de la Garza, 1992). Services need to be provided by a qualified rehabilitation counseling professional, in individual or group sessions that focus specifically on career development, employment preparation,

> ***It is the rehabilitation counselor's responsibility to initiate interagency relationships to facilitate transition services for students with disabilities and to best interpret the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.***

achieving independence, and integration in the workplace and community (Alabama Department of Education, Division of Rehabilitation Services, 1992; LRP, 1992). The rehabilitation counselor needs to be especially careful to identify students in need of transitional services from vocational rehabilitation and be sure not to let them slip between the cracks of various community services (Botterbusch, 1989).

In the transition process, the most important members of the IEP committee are the student and the parents, but the committee should also include the vocational rehabilitation counselor if the student is an eligible rehabilitation client (Alabama Department of Education, 1992). The student needs to learn the following tasks with the rehabilitation counselor's assistance: how to write a resume, complete job applications, interview for a job, job-keeping skills, acquisition of a part-time job, application for bus passes, learn to read a bus route, use public transportation, find actual bus routes to various places and travel independently (Karge, Patton, & de la Garza, 1992). The rehabilitation counselor should make these recommendations within the IEP meeting during transition planning.

Recommendations for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors

From a theoretical and planning perspective, there is a continuing need to improve **interdisciplinary and interagency collaboration**. Through collaboration, youths with disabilities can receive planned, appropriate and nonduplicated services. Since rehabilitation counselors are already active in networking for services for clients with disabilities, the rehabilitation counselor should take the initiative in establishing these relationships.

The student needs to be trained to participate in the IEP process. The student should be active in a self-advocacy training program that assists them in being active in both formal and informal transition activities and efforts. The student should be active in the decision-making process, being able to identify their goals, interests and preferences (LRP, 1992). The rehabilitation counselor can provide these objectives by utilizing the assistance of the rehabilitation teacher from rehabilitation centers who would teach students about self-advocacy, job-seeking skills and worker behaviors. Additionally, or in the absence of the rehabilitation teacher, the rehabilitation counselor should be prepared to go into the classroom and teach these skills.

Vocational Evaluator

The rehabilitation counselor needs to provide the **vocational evaluator** with as much background information as possible about the student in transition. The rehabilitation counselor should request a vocational evaluation that assesses the following areas for

students involved in transition programs: interests, cognitive skills, perceptual, sensory and motor skills, learning preferences and styles, vocational skills and aptitudes, career awareness and maturity, functional/life skills, behavior, and social adjustment (Alabama Department of Education, 1992). Vocational evaluators need to adopt a holistic assessment model that is able to be moved throughout the community. Evaluators need to be able to communicate with all professionals, family members, and the students in order to gain a picture of the total student (Botterbusch, 1989). The vocational evaluator needs to know about students with disabilities (Wehman, Moon, Everson, Wood, & Barcus, 1988) and we, as rehabilitation professionals, should encourage special educators to consult with vocational educators to help educate them about the students that they share.

The student needs to learn the following tasks with the rehabilitation counselor's assistance: how to write a resume, complete job applications, interview for a job, job-keeping skills, acquisition of a part-time job, application for bus passes, learn to read a bus route, use public transportation, find actual bus routes to various places and travel independently. The counselor should make these recommendations within the IEP meeting during transition planning.

Parents

Parents and their relationship with the schools are integral in the transition process (Chadsey-Rusch, Rusch, & Phelps, 1988). The parents need to be actively involved in the transition process. They need accurate and thorough information about transition services and how their presence in the process will affect the long-term outcomes for the student. Their preferences should be vocalized, as well as the assistance and support they are capable of providing for their child (LRP, 1992). The rehabilitation counselor should provide incentives, such as funds providing transportation to and from client/parent transition meetings, for the parents to participate in the student's transition process.

Special Education Teachers

Special Education teachers need to be aware of the community and the skills the students need to be successful in the community. Teachers need to know about jobs, support systems, leisure and integration activities and cultural differences (Chadsey-Rusch, Rusch, & Phelps, 1988). It is important for the **Special Education professionals** to understand the nature of vocational rehabilitation programs and their differences from special education

programs (Syzmanski, King, Parker, & Jenkins, 1989). The rehabilitation counselor can accomplish this by maintaining an open line of communication with the special education professionals, keeping them up-to-date on changes or additions to Vocational Rehabilitation policies and/or procedures.

School Counselors

School counselors should be an integral part of the transition team (Karge, Patton, & de la Garza, 1992). School counselors need to define their role in providing services to students with disabilities. School counselors need to define their role in providing services to students with disabilities. They need to spend more time working with students in transition, providing them with good, accurate career information, and developing a working relationship with the special education teacher (McDavis, Nutter, & Lovett, 1982) and the rehabilitation counselor. The school counselor can make a significant contribution to the effective, vocational and academic development of students with disabilities. The rehabilitation counselor should establish a working relationship with the school counselor, educating them about available vocational rehabilitation services.

Other functions of the vocational rehabilitation counselor in the transition process include: clarifying eligibility requirements to assure all eligible students are identified; participating in the IEP meeting to provide a perspective that is not normally considered, and providing parents with information about vocational rehabilitation as early as elementary school (Fenton & Keller, 1981). Rehabilitation counselors need to activate clients before they graduate from high school. They should begin to teach self-advocacy training in the high school years and visit with the client at home (Karge, Patton, & de la Garza, 1992).

Conclusion

School-to-work transition should be a carefully-orchestrated process that involves school and adult service providers to plan and provide individualized education, training and initial employment experiences. Successful transition is crucial for all youths, but is of paramount importance to those with disabilities. The context of transition should be viewed from a lifelong perspective (Chadsey-Rusch & Phelps, 1988). If we are to improve transition outcomes for individuals with disabilities by refocusing the IEP, we must also improve our capacity to deliver effective programs and services that are needed to produce good outcomes (Halpern, Benz, & Lindstrom, 1992.

Cooperative interagency relationships provide built-in professional development, facilities appropriate liaisons and fosters a client-centered approach (Sileo, Rude, & Luckner, 1988). The ultimate benefactors from a cooperative interagency relationship are the students and their parents (Syzmanski, King, Parker, & Jenkins, 1989). It is the rehabilitation counselor's responsibility to initiate interagency relationships to facilitate transition services for students with disabilities and to best interpret the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

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Other ALABAMA MATERIALS ON TRANSITION

Alabama's 1992 Conference Proceedings: Section One, **The National Scene**, includes the keynote addresses delivered by two national leaders in transition, Drs. Halpern and Brolin. Section Two, **A Window to Alabama's Commitment**, includes 11 papers on issues, programs, and services in the state. Section Three, **Resources**, includes 64 annotated references. (30 pictures, 122 pages, $6.00)

Alabama's 1993 Conference Proceedings: Section One, **The National Scene**, includes the keynote addresses delivered by two national leaders in transition, Drs. Halloran and Szymanski. Section Two, **A Window to Alabama's Commitment**, includes 10 papers on issues, programs, and services in the state. Section Three, **A Window to the Transition Literature**, includes 146 references grouped under (a) a Foundation, (b) Functional Assessment, (c) Functional Curricula, (d) Vocational Preparation, (e) Community Preparation, (f) Self-Determination, and (g) Interagency. (34 pictures, 139 pages, $6.00)

Alabama's Secondary Special Education Programs: An Examination: This study documents the needs of Alabama's secondary educational programs and services for youth with disabilities. The collective responses from 79 special education coordinators and 302 secondary special education teachers, who represent the city and county school systems throughout the 12 educational regions, are presented by over 70 Summary Highlight Statements. The findings serve as guidelines for needed areas of program development and improvement. (101 pages, 37 tables and adjoining graphs, $6.00)

Disabled Youth in Transition: A Literature Resource: This publication is an annotation of over 200 transition-related books, journal articles, tests, curriculums, and monographs. These resources are provided under the content areas of (a) A Foundation in Transition, (b) Vocational-Career Development, (c) Community/Independent Living, (d) Functional Curriculum/Instruction, (e) Programs/Services, (f) Research, and (g) other Information Resources. (69 pages, $3.00)

also see

Browning, P., & Brechin, C. (1993). Alabama's rehabilitation transition counselor's: A statewide study. Alabama Council for Exceptional Children Journal. 10(1), 3-9.

Browning, P., Brown, C., & Dunn, C. (1993). Vocational preparation and interagency cooperation with Alabama's secondary special education programs. Alabama Council for Exceptional Children Journal. 10(2), 3-12.

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